

FRONTISPIECE.



The View from Brighton Downs.

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THE
HAPPY FAMILY

AT
EASON HOUSE.

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EXHIBITED IN THE AMIABLE CONDUCT

OF THE
LITTLE NELSONS AND THEIR PARENTS.

INTERSPERSED WITH
SELECT PIECES OF POETRY.



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1799.

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1870

THE

THE



EASON HOUSE.

“ You judge it of important weight
“ To keep your rising offspring strait;
“ Your cares to body are confin’d,
“ Few fear obliquity of mind.
“ And shall the soul be warp’d aside
“ By passion, prejudice, or pride?”

COTTON.

CHAP. I.

“ Till with care the garden of the mind.”

THERE lived in one of the principal streets in London a merchant, whose name was Nelson, who had a large family of children; he was too much occupied with his extensive concerns in trade, to attend greatly to them himself; but it was the whole employment of his amiable wife to in-

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instruct

struct the younger ones ; which, with the assistance of their several masters, she was well qualified to do.

At the commencement of this history, the eldest boy, who was just twelve years of age, with his brother one year younger, was at a school in the country.—Two girls older, and two younger, with a little boy just out of petticoats, were the rest of the family.—Charles, for so was the little one named, was the darling of his father ; and Mr. Nelson was never happier than when seated by the fire, with this boy on his knee, he could see his wife and four daughters sitting by him.

“ Smiles by his chearful fire, and round surveys

“ His children’s looks, that brighten at the blaze.”

Whenever this was the case, his girls were using all their rhetoric to persuade him to buy a house in the ecuntry, like their neighbours.—“ Do, papa,” said Caroline, his second girl, “ buy a country seat, like Mr.

Mr. Tonty."—"Yes," added Mary, "you might as well, I am sure, papa, for you know you have quite as much money as he has"—Her father smiled, and asked how she came so well acquainted with the wealth of his strong box—"Oh," answered she, "Anne, (meaning the maid who usually attended them) told me so; and that you could afford to let me wear much better frocks than I do, if you chose it."—Her mama now interrupted her, by desiring her to remember, there was no merit either in wearing fine clothes, or living in handsome houses—"We are well convinced of that," said Charlotte, the eldest, and then nearly seventeen, "but it would be of such benefit to our health, you know, mama; my father is very fond of seeing his children happy, and there, I am sure, we should be so."—"Why, tell me now," said Mr. Nelson, "what do you think would be your favourite employ-

ment, were I to comply with your request? and first let me have your answer, Charlotte; as being the eldest, you are privileged to speak first."—"I can easily tell," answered Charlotte smiling, "what I should like; if mama would give me leave, I would keep bees and silk worms, like the Countess in Nature Displayed; oh, how glad I should be to attend to them, and wind off their silk, and then to preserve the bees, and form new hives; how delightful!"—"I fear," said Mrs. Nelson, "you would leave the bees and silk worms to take care of themselves, was an agreeable walk to come in the way; but now, Caroline," said she, "what would be your chief pleasure?" Caroline was fifteen, and unlike girls of her age, appeared fond of no amusement; she would set for an hour with a book, or seated in one of the front windows, to observe the carriages which were continually passing the house: the thought of visiting
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the country now appeared to give her pleasure, and she readily answered, "Oh, I shall have enough to do, to walk about the gardens and shrubberies, and I shall feed some tame birds, and if I spend any time there, shall have quite an aviary." "And now, Mary," said Mr. Nelson, "what will be your delight?" "Chickens, papa, chickens," answered she, "dear little creatures; just like those I saw when we went into Surry, to visit my cousin; so soft and warm, how I would attend and feed them." "And I," said her younger sister Jane, "will attend to the flowers, mama, and get the gardener to give me some seeds, and tell me the names of them, and then I can have a little garden of my own."—"And, now tell me, my Charles," said his father, kissing him, "what shall be your amusement?"—"I would gather the flowers," said the little boy, "and make large nosegays for mama's dressing-room."

room."—"There's a nice boy," said Mr. Nelson, "but do you know what the country is like?"—"To be sure, papa, it is like the park, where we walk when it is fine weather, and like those fine gardens you take us to sometimes; I am sure there are plenty of flowers there, only we must not gather them."—"I fancy you mean Kensington gardens," said his mama, "but you shall gather as many as you like in the fields and hedges:"—"Fields mama," interrupted Jane, "why that is where cows and horses are kept, do they plant flowers for them?"—"Those," answered Mrs. Nelson, "are the natural production of the ground, and though, in general, smaller than what we cultivate in gardens, their colours are much more delicate, and oftener better worth admiration; but in the latter end of the summer it is not uncommon to see the hedges hung with roses and honeysuckles," "How beautiful," exclaimed all

all the girls, "how I long to see them." "The wild honeyfuckles," continued their mother, "are called woodbine, and the wild rose, eglantine, by the poets; these you have frequently met with in their writings," addressing herself to the elder girls: their conversation was now interrupted by Charles, who let something fall, and on Caroline's taking it up, his father perceived it was his tooth-pick case, and that it was broken in the fall; this accident, as it was a very handsome one, and what he much valued, made him put his favourite off his knee with rather more force than he had ever done before. Charles, looking in his father's face, was struck with the appearance of displeasure he saw there, and burst into tears.—"Ah, papa, are you angry with me?" said he, as he hung upon his arm. Mr. Nelson could not withstand the supplicating looks of the little fellow, and replacing him in his

his old station, said "not with you, my dear boy, but with myself, for giving you such a thing to play with." One reconciling kiss from his father made Charles forget his tears, and pleasure again beamed in the faces of all. When the servant appeared to take the three youngest to bed, their father and mother gave them each an affectionate kiss, and as they left the room, Mrs. Nelson said, "be sure and dream of the country, and perhaps to-morrow we may talk more of it." When they were gone, their father, as the circle drew nearer to the fire, said to his girls, "now then I'll tell you a secret; to-morrow, about this time, I believe I shall have it in my power to say your wishes are gratified"—"What, in respect to a country house, papa?" asked Charlotte, "how good you are, for I see by your looks it is so"—"Is the affair likely to be settled so soon," said Mrs. Nelson—"Yes," answered he, "I saw

"I saw the gentleman this morning, and he perfectly agrees to my proposals; to-morrow the paper is to be signed, which gives me possession of Eason House."—

"Eason House," said Caroline to her sister, "what a pretty name! and where is it situated, papa?" asked she, turning towards him.—"On the side of the Suffex Downs," said he, "and within ten miles of Brighton."—"How charming!" exclaimed Charlotte.—"If you, my dear children," said Mrs. Nelson, "are as much pleased with the house, and all belonging to it, as I was when I saw it last summer with your father, I am sure you will be happy there"—"That we should be any where in the country; it must be so much better than confined to this smoaky town the whole year; and with you and my father with us, we shall want nothing to compleat our happiness."—"I am afraid," said Mr. Nelson, "that will not be often the
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the case, I can but seldom leave my counting-house to spend half an hour with you here, how shall I then find time to visit you at such a distance?"—"I hope," answered his wife, "that you may trust the business sometimes to your clerks, of whom, you say, you have a very good opinion, and a little relaxation is necessary for every body." The girls could talk of nothing but the pleasing prospect before them, the remainder of the evening; asking many questions not in their parents' power to answer, and when they went to bed, smiling said, "you need not tell us, mama, to dream of the country, for we shall dream of nothing else."

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

“ ——— You took me up

“ An infant, to the desert world expos’d,

“ And prov’d another parent.”

“ You took me up, a little tender flower

“ Just sprouted on a bank, which the next frost

“ Had nipp’d, and with a careful loving hand

“ Transplanted me into your own fair garden.”

THE next morning all the family again assembled at breakfast. Charles, who could not so conveniently take his milk and water on his father’s knee, had a high chair placed next to his, that he might, as he said, “talk to him of the country,” for his sisters, who had not lost the idea of Eason House, in their walk round their little garden, so raised in his imagination
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the pleasure to be enjoyed in the gardens and shrubberies, of which, they having seen so little of it, concluded the country was composed, that he was now as anxious as themselves to go there, and immediately on his father's coming into the room, asked him, "when they should leave town?" "Has not my little boy forgot that scheme yet?" said Mr. Nelson, as he gave him his usual morning kiss, "I cannot tell you now, but as soon as I know myself, I promise to inform you all:" they thanked him, and joined in wishing that it might be very soon. After breakfast Mrs. Nelson retired with her children to what they called their school-room, and where they were attended by their different masters. Charles was soon tired of listening to the instructions of the person who taught his sisters music, and begged leave to go to Anne, which his mama permitted, on his promising to come and read to her as soon

as

Mr. Du Val was gone. Jane had not yet begun music, she therefore worked while her sisters were at the harpsichord, and when their master was gone, gladly resigned it to read, in which she was soon interrupted by Charles, who bursting into the room, with a face full of meaning, cried out, "Oh, mama, mama, come here; a poor woman and a little child!" His eagerness to tell the story made it impossible for them to understand what he meant, had not Anne following, told her mistress that on the steps of the door a poor woman had fainted away, and was not yet recovered—"if you could give me a smelling bottle, ma'am," said she, "perhaps that might revive her."—Mrs. Nelson instantly gave it to the good-natured girl, and very humanely went herself to assist the poor creature, whom she found at the door as Anne had described; but, on perceiving her weak and emaciated form, she sent one

of her daughters, who had all followed her, to get a cordial from her store-room, which she thought might restore her, could it by any means be poured down her throat. The little child which Charles had mentioned, and who did not appear more than sixteen months old, stood by his mother's knees, and though he was not sensible of her situation, on seeing so many strangers about her began to cry. A crowd was now gathering round the door, notwithstanding it rained hard, and Mrs. Nelson thought it best to have the poor woman brought within it: Charlotte took the little boy in her arms, who cried more than before at being separated from his mother:—"You had better take him away, my dear," said Mrs. Nelson, "perhaps he may be quiet when he does not see the poor woman." Charlotte, followed by all her sisters, and Charles, who seemed particularly struck with his ragged appearance, took the little stranger

stranger to another room. Mrs. Nelson, then, with the assistance of her maids, tried every means to recover his mother, who still continued insensible. When the apothecary arrived, for whom the footman had been sent, he said there was little chance of her recovery, but advised their putting her into a warm bed: Anne directly offered hers, and prepared it for her; the other maids carried her up stairs in their arms, and laid her in it; and Mrs. Nelson and Anne continued by the bed side to watch her revival. Charlotte had succeeded in quieting her little charge, to whom she gave some bread and milk, and he laughed heartily at Charles's playful tricks, who did all he could to divert him, when Mary, who had been out of the room, returned with the intelligence, that the poor woman was better, and gone up stairs to sleep: this gave satisfaction to all the girls, and Charlotte desired Charles to make no more

C 2 noise;

noise; the little boy having nothing to divert him, soon fell asleep, and enjoyed a sound slumber on the carpet, on which Charlotte laid him, while she went with her sisters Mary and Jane to attend their writing-master, whose arrival was just then announced, and at their return they still found him sleeping. When the apothecary called again, he was shewn into the room where Mrs. Nelson and Anne still sat by the poor woman. On taking her hand, he pronounced her "certainly dead:" Mrs. Nelson was extremely shocked to hear this; and as her maids had before examined her pockets, and found nothing but a small box marked George King, that could in the least lead to a discovery of her name or place of abode; she was quite at a loss how to dispose of her. Her dress was not ragged, though very much patched and mended: the box Mrs. Nelson took into her own possession, and her clothes were laid carefully

fully by, if at any future time they might be claimed by her relations, and by that means they might perhaps get acquainted with her family: "but what shall we do with the child; ma'am?" asked Anne with a pitying look; "poor thing, it is left without knowing one of its friends." "I will be a friend to it," said her mistress, "and when Mr. Nelson comes home, we will ask his advice what is to be done with it." She then went to her children in the parlour, and as she opened the door the little boy awoke; she took it in her arms, and the child with a degree of fondness clung round her neck: this action was too much for Mrs. Nelson's present feelings, softened as her heart was at that moment, by having just witnessed the death of its mother, and she felt quite a regard for him; so true is the observation, "that nothing excites the compassion of a feeling mind, more than the silent intreaties of an helpless object." — "Ah, mama," said Char-

lotte, "I fear the poor woman is not better, your looks tell me so." "No;" said Mrs. Nelson, "nor ever will be; she is dead." "Dead!" they all exclaimed, "oh, this poor child!" "We must feel for it," said their mother, "for it is not old enough to know its own loss." "And shall we not keep it here, mama?" asked Mary. "I hope you will not send him away," added Jane and Caroline, joining her intreaties to the rest, and desired her mother to place it on her lap. "This," said she, while her eyes filled with tears, "shall be my amusement and employment at Eason House; I will no longer be idle when this poor child wants my assistance." Her mother kissed her, and secretly rejoiced to find her daughter not void of feeling, which she had lately feared was the case, as few things, as I have before hinted, appeared to interest her: but Caroline was not an unamiable girl; her heart was good, and her feelings strong, though

though but seldom affected ; and when they were, the effect it produced sufficiently evinced the goodness of her understanding at so young an age. Good resolutions are generally formed, but when the occasion is forgot, it is too often the case, that the resolution is no more remembered : this was the fault of Caroline ; the inactivity mentioned was her natural disposition, and therefore she was not to be blamed, though it was what she ought to have broken herself of.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

“ To bestow a favour on a friend, is to confer
“ happiness on one’s self ; and to receive an
“ obligation, is, in some measure, to repay it,
“ by supplying one’s friend with an oppor-
“ tunity of feeling the most refined plea-
“ sure.”

ON Mr. Nelson’s coming home in the evening, his daughters, who, by this time, felt more than ever interested for the poor child, determined to use all their eloquence to persuade their father to keep him in the house, and accordingly introduced the young stranger, after telling the melancholy tale of his mother’s death. Mr. Nelson, reading in his wife’s face that she had no objection,

jection, and being naturally fond of children, readily complied with their intreaties, only saying, "the servants ought to be consulted, who, perhaps, might not like such an addition to their work." "I do not think," said Mary, "they will mind that; for I just now heard Anne say she would do any thing for him, and that he should sleep with her, with all her heart." Mrs. Nelson then proposed a scheme which met with the general concurrence; which was, that on their removal into the country, the child should be placed with the gardener's wife, who was to live in a cottage on the estate they were about to purchase; and she then asked her husband what was to be done respecting the funeral of the poor woman, who was still in the house: after some deliberation, Mr. Nelson determined to put an advertisement in the newspapers, describing her's and the child's dress, that, if she had any relations in town, they might
be

be informed of her death; but he did not suppose he should hear from them, as from the appearance of the woman, he guessed they were poor, and would therefore be glad to leave the child in such good hands. In a day or two the woman was buried, and the child seemed perfectly acquainted with the whole family, and became a great favourite. The girls, who had worked very hard to make him clothes, now began to be again anxious for their going into the country, which the late occurrence had for a little while entirely put out of their minds, and when their father told them, as it was now the end of April, he should soon think of removing, they were quite delighted; and renewed their schemes of keeping bees and chickens, and planting flowers—"I shall be very impatient," said Charlotte, "till the time arrives." "I wonder," said Mary, "if we shall go all over the house the first night; I don't think I shall sleep when I am once there,

there, till I have seen every room"—"And then the next morning," said Caroline, "to run out in the garden, and taste the fresh air, which we have read of as being so pleasant in the country; and hear the birds singing, and see the shepherds driving their flocks to pasture."—"I see," said Mr. Nelson, who had been listening to their conversation, "you expect to be in the regions of Arcadia, and will all turn Pastora's; what, if you see nothing but barren downs; for our house is situated at the bottom of the hill; it commands a fine prospect though," added he, seeing disappointment expressed in their looks, "and by going on the top of the downs, you will see the sea." "Well, for my part," said Jane, "I like going into the country for nothing better, than because we shall not have any of our cross masters there, for I am almost sick of them."—"You will not have the same," said her mother, "but certainly will

will be attended by some; we shall not be at such a distance from Brighton, but that masters may come from thence; and, indeed, I should be sorry if that could not be, as you would lose a great deal by spending the summer in the country, were you to do nothing but run about the whole time."

"I wish," said Charles, "that George (for so they called the little boy, in allusion to the name on the box,) was old enough to run about with me, and could talk as well as I do; when do you think he will, papa?" "Oh, not yet these two years," answered Mr. Nelson; "but you will not want a companion, my dear, you have been always used to play by yourself; besides your brothers will soon come home for the holidays." In such conversation with their parents the children passed the tedious month, till they were to go into the country; and, when alone, in building castles in the air, of what Eason House was like.

"I should

"I should like to know if we shall have any neighbours in the country," said Caroline to her sisters, as they were going in the carriage with their mother to take leave of some friends, and, indeed, the only young people they knew; as Mrs. Nelson guarded against their forming too many acquaintances, for she was well convinced, in London, it only led to more visiting than she liked. Mrs. Rivers (for that was the name of the family) was a widow, and an intimate friend of Mrs. Nelson's from childhood, had followed that lady's example in the education of her children, and though they had always lived in town, as an uncle of her's had taken them under his protection, and in whose house they resided, they had seen as little of the world, as if, instead of Grosvenor-square, they had spent all their lives in a country village. When the Miss Nelsons arrived, their friends received them with great joy, and after they had

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drank

drank tea with their mothers, Mr. Rivers told them to take their companions into their own parlour, and there make as much noise as they pleased. — “I assure you,” added he, “your mothers did not mind how noisy they were, when they were of your age, and would often make my head ache then, but now I am older I don’t mind it.” The young people smiled and left the room, inviting him to join their party: he bid them not be deceitful, for he knew they did not want him. “I am glad of this permission to move,” said Miss Rivers, when they were seated in the other parlour, “for I have a thousand things to talk to you about; but first let me ask you, my dear Charlotte, if what your mama said at tea, of your going into the country, is soon to take place?” Charlotte answered, “she hoped very soon, but as we are not going to live entirely there,” added she, “I trust you will not be very sorry, as you know it is
what

what we have long wished." "As it is to give you pleasure," said her friend, "I will endeavour not to regret your absence, though you must suppose it will be a great loss to us." Mary had seated herself by the second Miss Rivers, and was giving her an account of Eason House, such as she had heard it described by her mother; and Caroline was endeavouring to persuade her sister Jane not to touch a large wax doll which lay in one of the chairs, and belonged to Miss Anne Rivers, a little girl rather older than herself; but she was too much amused with it to put it away till Charlotte interfered, and she saw the child to whom it belonged enter the room, who, as a great favour, displayed the doll's clothes to her visitor, and allowed her to dress it; the others drew round the fire, and when they thought of the time it might be before they met again, determined to have a comfortable chat; this idea made even Caroline join in the conversation, with

uncommon earnestness. "Why, my dear," said Miss Rivers, "the thought of going into the country has quite enlivened you; I never saw you so disposed to talk before, and therefore I shall ask you to tell me about a child I have heard of, who was found crying at your door one night at ten o'clock, and that nobody knew to whom it belonged: pray is there any truth in that story?"—"Part of it is true," said Caroline, "but like all other tales of this sort, it has been greatly added to:" she then recounted the circumstance as it really happened, and Miss Rivers was delighted with the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Nelson. "I should like to see your little protegee," said she—"that I hope you soon will," answered Charlotte, "as I know you are to drink tea with us before we leave town." They then examined the book-case, and Miss Rivers shewed them some new books her uncle had bought for them; and afterwards produced

duced some drawings, she and her sister had just finished. After they had admired them, and faithfully promised to write to each other when separated, they returned to the other room, leaving the little girls still at play. On their re-appearance, Mrs. Nelson invited the young ladies to tea the next day with their mother, an invitation they readily accepted, but was surprised to hear their uncle, who was a very good natured man, say he could not allow them to go, unless Mrs. Nelson would consent to a proposal of his. "I believe there is not much doubt of my doing that," answered that lady, "but I never promise till I know what it is." "I have been thinking," said he, "that as your young ones are going into the country for the first time, it will appear very strange to the people they meet with there, to hear them say they have never been to a play, though they have lived all their lives in London; I will, therefore,

therefore, if you will give us leave, that is," added he, smiling on the girls, who now paid great attention to what he was saying, "take them with my girls to Covent Garden theatre, the night after to-morrow, where I shall provide a box, and Mrs. Rivers and myself shall be there to see no harm happens to them; and if you will join the party, madam, we shall be very happy in your company; but it is only on these conditions I can allow my neices to drink tea with you to-morrow." All eyes were now fixed on Mrs. Nelson, and awaiting her answer in silent expectation—"You are very good, sir," said she, "and I am sure my girls are much obliged to you, though they do not seem to think it necessary to say so"—"O yes, mama, indeed we do," they all exclaimed at once, "but we were so afraid you would not consent, that we really could not speak."—"You will, I hope, ma'am," said Miss Ri-

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vers; "my uncle is so good as to think it would give us more pleasure, if the Miss Nelson's were of the party, and I am sure he judges right."—"I certainly can have no objection," said Mrs. Nelson, "and though Mary is under the age I have said my children should be, before I allowed them to partake of such amusements, yet on this occasion, and at Mr. Rivers's particular request, I consent."—"Thank ye, thank ye," re-echoed round the room, and the girls were not more delighted than the old gentleman, who congratulated them and himself on the success of his scheme, and at parting, told them to think of nothing else till the time came.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

“ Cards were superfluous here, with all the tricks
“ That idleness has ever yet contriv’d
“ To fill the void of an unfurnish’d brain.”

COWPER.

THE next day, the Miss Rivers’s with their mama drank tea with them, and so delighted were they with the thought of the following evening, and in talking of the Cure for the Heart-Ach, which was to be the play, and the Children in the Wood, that the Miss Nelsons almost forgot it was necessary to entertain their visitors any other way. After tea, they introduced little George to them, who was now much more with the servants than at first; as
Mrs.

Mrs. Nelson found he made her young people inattentive to any thing but himself, whilst in the parlour; but as soon as their various occupations were over, they were allowed to send for the child, and with whom they amused themselves all their leisure time; he could already walk round the room, with the help of the chairs, and would sit for an hour on the carpet, where Charles was always happy to amuse him: the whole family were extremely fond of him, and he returned all their caresses with good humour. "You never knew such a sweet-tempered child," said Jane, to Miss Rivers, as he sat on that young lady's knee; "and do you know, though Charles often takes away his marbles from him, he never cries." "You need not say I take the marbles away from him, Miss Jane," said her brother, "for I am sure I never did, but once, and I would give him all I have," added he, kissing his cheek. "I dare say
you

you would, my dear," said Miss Rivers, and no doubt you are both very good to the poor little fellow, for you know he is put under your protection." "I think," said Jane, who felt her consequence increase on hearing this, "he looks sleepy, I'll ring the bell for Ann;" to whom on her appearing he held out his hands, in token of a wish to go. As they left the room, Mr. Nelson met them, whom the child immediately knew, and endeavoured to attract his notice: he did not pass him without a kiss, and the girls were delighted to observe their father so fond of him. The evening passed in the same manner, as at Miss Rivers's; and on those ladies taking their leave, mutual injunctions were given not to be too late the next night, when they were all to meet at Mr. Rivers's, by that gentleman's desire, and from thence proceed to the theatre, in two coaches. "Oh, I wish the time was come," said Caroline, as she came down stairs,

affairs, the next morning, but Mary was more anxious to know what she should wear:—"People dress very smart to go to the play, don't they, mama?" enquired she. "You will not," answered Mrs. Nelson; "as you are both rather short of your age, you and Caroline may go as children, and Charlotte, I believe, will wear only a piece of ribbon through her hair." "Dear!" said Mary, "if I was her, I would put a wreath of flowers round my head, I hear they are very much worn." "And pray who told you so?" enquired her mother. "Why Mr. Le Motte, our dancing-master, who says all his ladies wear them on public days!" Mrs. Nelson smiled, when she heard from whom Mary took her idea of fashion, and said, "I think, as none of you go to shew yourselves, but to see the play, it will be time enough to dress, when you have been there so often as to feel no entertainment from the stage; at present I should

should think the least incumbrance of finery would be best, which would only take off your attention." The business of the morning could scarcely be attended to, nor did their masters wonder at it, when Mrs. Nelson told them by way of apology, for what was so unusual, that they were going to a play that evening for the first time. Jane wished she had been old enough to have gone, but never once asked her mama to take her; at her age she concluded that was impossible; and as Mrs. Rivers had invited her to spend part of the evening with her youngest daughter, she did not so much mind it—"we shall have a play of our own," said she, as she went up stairs to be dressed; but, alas! poor Jane, had not her mama taken compassion on her, and tied on her muslin frock, must have gone in her morning one, for her sisters had so fully engaged the maid, that she could get nothing done by her, as they
had

had dined late, there was no time to be lost; this was what Charlotte repeated many times to Anne, and then the voices of all were heard at once, "tie my frock; pray tie my shoes. Oh, do tie my sash, there's a good Anne. What shall I do! pray, dear Anne, come here, I have got this string in a knot, and you know I am so slow, that I am always behind hand." This was their conversation the hour they were dressing, and when Caroline was ready, "I do believe," said she, "I shall enjoy this evening very much, though I have thought of it so long; but I have heard many people say, what they have depended on to afford them pleasure, they are in general disappointed in." "Ah," retorted Mary with quickness, "don't let us have any of your moralizing remarks, we are going to be happy, a'n't we? and what should hinder us?"—"Nothing;" said Caroline, yet she appeared hurt at her sister's answer, and

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already

already looked as if she was not so. Charlotte appeared displeased, and said, "fie, Mary, your joy need not make you ill-natured or impertinent; what Caroline said was very true, and you may experience it before it is long."—"I did not mean to be either," answered Mary, "but for Caroline to say, that many people had been disappointed when they expected pleasure, made me think, I might perhaps be so; and that idea had never once entered my head, and I did not like it should now; but I am sorry for it," added she, "and hope Caroline will forgive me:" who, on her extending her hand, received it with great good humour, saying, "indeed Mary I think nothing about it." At this moment their mother entered the room, and Jane with her in high spirits—"See," said she, "you have only had the maid to dress you; and mama has put on my frock: am not I honoured?"—"Indeed;" said Charlotte, "you have
reason

reason to be proud; for it is a great while since mama has dressed either of us." "Do you think this ribbon round my waist clean enough, mama?" asked Mary, as she once more viewed herself in the glass. "Quite;" answered Mrs. Nelson, "for, most probably, no one will see you have a ribbon on"—and then inviting them to tea, she went down stairs, whither they presently followed. "We have only to regret," said Caroline, "that my father cannot accompany us to-night."

CHAP. V.

— "The comely tear

"Steals o'er the cheek, or else the comic muse

"Holds to the world a picture of itself."

THOMPSON.

ON their arrival at the theatre, they fancied themselves in a new world; the lights, music, and brilliancy of the company, astonished all the young ones; and Mr. and Mrs. Rivers, and Mrs. Nelson, equally enjoyed their surprise: the play was not began, and they had sufficient time to make their remarks before the curtain drew up. "What a number of people, mama!" said Mary, when she had a little recovered herself; "I had no idea the house was so large:

large: is it as full as this every night? how happy these ladies must be to come so often."—"Not half so happy as we are," said Miss Rivers, "who were never here before." The company in the other boxes now attracted their attention: "how charming!" repeated Mary, "I hope the play won't begin yet, that I may have time to admire all I see;" while the three eldest were attentively listening to a piece of music they had often played themselves, and were struck with the difference of the harmony, when performed by a band and on a single instrument. The curtain at length drew up, and the attention of the whole party was immediately fixed on the stage; they no longer thought of any thing but the performers, nor did their eyes wander as before in quest of amusement; they found enough to interest them in the performance, which was so new to them. "Have I not reason," said Mrs. Nelson to

her friend, as she remarked their attention, "to applaud my resolution in not suffering my family to partake of this entertainment at an earlier age; had they been brought here when children, this play would not have interested them half so much as now, nor would they ever feel so much pleasure from one." — "You were quite right," said Mrs. Rivers, "people certainly must enjoy a thing better that they understand; and a play, I think, can hardly be intelligible to a child; yet, after having been amused at that age with the scenery, one is apt to think more of that than the plot of the play when older." Between the acts, the young people could say but little to each other, their thoughts were entirely engrossed by what they had seen, and till the piece ended they could not speak; then all were sorry it was over, it was so pretty, yet they were pleased it ended happily. "I think, mama," said Caroline, "we cannot

cannot thank you too often, for letting us see a play for the first time in London; here we have the advantage of seeing the best performers, and we cannot shew our ignorance in admiring what is not worthy of it." When the after-piece began, they thought no more of the play, and the sorrows of the innocent Children in the Wood attracted all their pity; when they were at last restored to their parents, and the worthy Walter and Josephine made happy, they wiped the tears, which, in spite of their efforts to prevent it, trickled down their cheeks: Caroline was the only one who did not weep; their griefs seemed to have made too great an impression on her, but she readily joined in the smile when their happiness was complete, and their united thanks were offered to Mr. Rivers for the pleasure he had procured them. A great part of the company left the house before the conclusion of the entertainment, which
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is the general custom, but he seeing them so interested in it, would not order their carriages to draw up till it was quite finished:—"No, no," said he, "I do not like to go away myself without knowing the end of every thing; and as the girls were never here before, they shall stay as long as they like." On their return home, he insisted on their going first into his house, and on Mrs. Nelson's attempting to speak, he added—"you know, madam, I am governor to-night, and for once, I will have my way with your young people as well as my own." They therefore alighted at his door, and on entering the parlour, were surprised with the agreeable sight of the table spread with biscuits, lemonade, &c. "I thought," said he, "we should be thirsty, so I ordered some refreshments to be procured; and now girls take what you like; I have no notion of not ending the evening handsomely." Mrs. Nelson joined
with

with her daughters in thanking him for this attention, and the young ladies gladly partook of what he offered. "I declare," said Miss Rivers, "I was never so happy in my life, and I think, my dear uncle, I shall never forget how much I am obliged to you." The Miss Nelson's again wished to thank him, but he prevented their speaking, by saying, "I beg I may hear no more of these fine speeches, young ladies; I did it as much to please myself as you, and if you keep repeating the same thing over and over again, you shall go off the stage."—"That," said Mrs. Nelson smiling, "I think we must do very soon, or neither of us shall help transgressing; we have been too much used to speak what we think, to act the parts you assign us well." After they had drank a few glasses of lemonade, and expressed their approbation of the different performers, their carriage was again ordered, and they arrived safe at home;

home; there they had to recount all they had seen to their father, who was delighted with their happiness, and sincerely wished he could have been with them.

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CHAP. VI.

—————"Now from the town,
"Buried in smoke, and sleep, and noisome damp;
"Oft' let me wander o'er the dewy fields
"Where freshneſs breathes."

THOMPSON.

THE next morning, Mr. Nelson asked his family when they were aſſembled at breakfast, if the pleaſure of the laſt evening had damped their deſire of going into the country:—"Oh no, papa;" answered Charlotte, "not at all, we are ſtill as anxious to go, and hope ſoon to be told to prepare for our journey."—"I was talking of it this morning," ſaid Caroline, "and though,

to be sure, last night when I was at the play, I thought I should never desire to leave the only place where I could partake of such pleasure; I now feel as anxious as ever to go, for I know very well we cannot go to a play often.”—“And in the country,” said her mother, “your pleasures are all from yourselves, you are not obliged to apply to others for amusement; it is always to be found if you chuse to make the application, and independence is one of the advantages of the country.”—“Well,” said Mr. Nelson, “you may all soon experience it, for next Monday is the day I have fixed to be at Eason House.” The children clapped their hands for joy, and nothing was to be heard of till the day arrived but packing up clothes, books, and music; their instruments were also to be sent, though others their father said were already in the house.—“But, then,” added he, “you may often play together; and

with my flute, we may almost raise a concert."—"How charming!" said Charlotte, "and with the addition of mama's voice, and Caroline's, it will not be contemptible."

Joy sparkled in all their eyes, when they got into the carriages which were to convey them from London. Mrs Nelson and three of her daughters occupied the coach, and sometimes their father, though he performed most of the journey on horseback: the other children went with Anne and their little foundling in an hired chaise; one servant attended his master on horseback, the rest were sent by the public stages, which are continually running from London to Brighton; and were already in the house, as they travelled post. They had not time to make observations on any town they passed through, except on its appearance, and this they could not much admire, as they had spent all their lives in the metropolis; they were only struck with the

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comparative

comparative smallness of every place they saw: at the inn they stopped to dine at, they were joined by the party in the chaise; both the little boys had slept great part of the way, for they were taken up so early, that it had broken their night's rest, "Oh, mama," said Jane, "you cannot think how I wished to be with you in the coach, for I saw so many pretty things in the road, which I wanted to talk to you about, and so many fine houses, and you, I dare say, could have told me who lived in them all; and then such a number of horses and cows in the fields, but I dared not speak a word for fear of waking the children, Anne said." — "My dear," said Mrs. Nelson, "you seem determined to make up for your silence in the chaise by talking now; but, do you not suppose we saw the same pretty things, as you call them, who came the same road." "Yes, mama," answered Jane, "but you could speak of them directly." — "And you," said

said her father, as he took her on his knee, "had hoarded up all your remarks till your meeting, and now, your mama will not let you publish them : cruel woman ! but see," added he, pointing to the table, on which was just placed as good a dinner as they could expect to meet with on so short a notice, "here is something which will employ you better, and of which no one will wish to deprive you." The novelty of the entertainment to the younger ones, together with the hunger their journey had occasioned, made them think it a charming meal. "I declare," said Mary, "it is very good of these people to allow us a room to sit in, and victuals to eat, without partaking of it themselves ; for though they are paid for it, as it is their own, they have a right to any room in the house : I wonder whether they do not sometimes wish to eat a bit with their guests, after

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they

they have been at the trouble of providing for them.”—“Perhaps they may,” said her father, “though they generally live very well, and now travelling is so much in fashion, I should suppose the inn-keepers must make a great deal of money, yet I think of all employments, their’s is the most disagreeable, and deserves a recompence.” After eating an hasty meal, they returned to their carriages: “I am sure,” said Charles, as the footman lifted him into the chaise, “I shall not sleep now.” Mary took Jane’s place as her companion, and she gladly went to the coach. The idea of being so much nearer their journey’s end raised all their spirits, and as they were expressing their different ideas of Eason House, and the pleasure to be enjoyed there, Mrs. Nelson said, “your conversation reminds me of a piece of poetry I learned when young, called Castle Building.”

ing."—"O, do repeat it, mama," said Charlotte, and on the other's joining in the request, she complied as follows:

CASTLE BUILDING,

AN ELEGY.

Goddeſs of golden dreams, whoſe magic power
Sheds ſmiles of joy o'er miſery's haggard face;
And lavish ſtrews the viſionary flower,
To deck life's dreary path with tranſient grace.

I woo thee, fancy, from thy fairy cell,
Where midſt the endleſs woes of human kind,
Wrapt in ideal bliſs, thou lov'ſt to dwell,
And ſport in happier regions unconfin'd.

Deep ſunk, O goddeſs, in thy pleaſing trance,
Oft' let me ſeek yon low ſequeſter'd vale,
Where wiſdom's ſelf ſhall ſteal a ſidelong glance,
And ſmile contempt, but liſten to thy tale.

Be their's to ſearch where cluſt'ring roſes grow,
Touching each ſharp thorn's point to prove how
keen;

Be mine to trace their beauties as they blow,
And catch their fragrance where they bluſh unſeen.

Haply my path may lie thro' barren vales,
Where niggard fortune all her sweets denies;
E'en there shall fancy scent the ambient gales,
And scatter flow'rets of a thousand dies.

Nor let the worldling scoff: be his the task
To form deep schemes, and mourn his hopes
betray'd;

Be mine to range unseen, 'tis all I ask,
And form new worlds beneath the silent shade.

I see, entranc'd, the gay conceptions rise,
My harvest ripen, and my white flocks thrive;
And still as fancy pours her large supplies,
I taste the god-like happiness to give.

To raise up modest merit from the ground,
And send the unhappy smiling from my door,
To spread content and happiness around,
And banquet on the blessings of the poor.

To join the artless maid, and honest swain,
Where fortune rudely bars the way to joy;
To ease the tender mother's heartfelt pain,
And guard with soft'ning hands her darling boy.

To check the patient widow's deep-fetch'd sighs,
And shield her infant from the north blast rude;
To bid the sweetly glist'ning tear arise,
Which swims in the glad eye of gratitude.

Delicious

Delicious dream! how oft' beneath thy power,
Thus light'ning the sad load of other's woe;
steal from rigid fate one happy hour,
Nor feel I want the pity I bestow.

Delicious dream! how often dost thou give
A gleam of bliss, which truth would but destroy:
Oft' dost thou bid my drooping heart revive,
And catch one cheerful transient glimpse of joy.

Ah, but for thee, the heavy hand of care
'Ere this, had mark'd with tears my furrow'd
cheek;

Long since the thiv'ring grasp of cold despair,
Had chill'd my heart, and taught it how to break.

Oh, come then, fancy, and with lenient hand
Dry my moist cheek, and smoothe my furrow'd
brow:

Bear me o'er smiling tracks of fairy land,
And give me more than fortune can bestow.

Mixt are her boons, and chequer'd all with ill,
Her smiles, the sun-shine of an April morn:
The cheerless valley skirts the gilded hill,
And latent storms in ev'ry gale are borne.

Give

Give me thy joy which sickens not the heart,
Give me thy wealth which has no wings to fly,
Give me the pride thy honours can impart,
Thy friendship give me, warm in poverty.

Give me a wish, the worldling may deride,
The fool may censure, and the proud may hate,
Wrapt in thy dreams to lay the world aside,
And snatch a bliss beyond the reach of fate.

They stopped not the rest of the journey, but to change horses, and late in the evening arrived at Eason House. As they drove through the paddock which surrounded it, every heart beat with expectation, and each head was bent towards the window, that they might catch the first glance of the building: the lateness of the evening prevented their having a very clear view, but what they did see they were all disposed to admire, and as Caroline cast her eyes to the top of the Downs, near the foot of which I have before said it stood, she pictured to herself the charming prospect to be

be seen from thence.—“Dear mama,” said Jane, “shall we be ever able to climb to the top of that hill? I never saw one so high before.”—“I hope we shall, my love,” said her mother, “and the extensive view we shall command when there, will amply reward us for the trouble.” A stop was put to their conversation by their arriving at the door; the servants appeared, and Mr. Nelson handed his wife and children into the hall, where a cheerful fire blazed on the hearth, and which, though it was in the month of May, they were not sorry to behold. Joy beamed in the countenances of the whole family; even Charles roused from his sleepy fit, which, in spite of his boast, had overtaken him long before they reached their destination, and congratulated himself and sisters on their arrival: supper was spread for them in the parlour, and Charles partook of it, while little George was taken care of by Anne; the young ones, however, were

were not sorry when she came to know that they were disposed for bed, and thought Charlotte and Caroline would have gone over the house that night, they followed their mother's advice, and retired soon after to rest. "I must look out of window," said Charlotte when in her room, and they both flew to it—"it looks to the garden," said she; "how much better than the number of houses we used to see from our chamber in town."—"I wish it was morning," said Caroline, "that we might run out in it; if ever I come to a new house again," added she, "I hope our arrival will be in the morning, that we may have time to see every room in it before I go to bed."—"I am not at all disposed to sleep," said Charlotte, "but in compassion to Anne, we will get into bed, for I see she is tired."—"Indeed I am, ma'am," said she, "for I have had the little boy in my arms all day; but," added she sighing, "I suppose I shall not

not long have him to nurse, a dear little creature, and that is the only reason I am sorry we are come into the country." After telling her she was his best friend, Charlotte wished her a good night, and desired her to call them up very early the next morning.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

———"Together let us tread
"The morning dews, and gather in their prime
"Fresh-blooming flowers."

THOMPSON.

CONTRARY to the usual custom, the young ones awoke Anne, and begged to be drest, that they might go down stairs; their sister's impatience roused Charlotte and Caroline, and they all met on the stair-case. "We will not open any of the rooms above," said Charlotte, "lest we should disturb papa and mama; let us go into the garden." When they were down stairs, they were met by the housemaid, who was preparing

preparing the parlour for their reception ; of her they enquired the way to the garden, and they were delighted on entering it ; the flowers were almost in full bloom, and the air was scented with the lilies of the valley, of which there was a large bed at the entrance. " See," said Charlotte, " could we have any idea of the beauty of flowers in London? To be sure, those we used to buy in Covent Garden were pretty, but these are far superior, and we may enjoy them at any time." " May I gather one rose?" said Jane, " I don't think I ever had one in my bosom before," added she, as she tucked it into her belt. " We may all have one," said Mary, and distributed some to her elder sisters, who had arm-in-arm walked down the garden: " what can be the reason," said Caroline, as they traversed the different walks, " that I feel ready to cry, at the sight of all these charms? It is not that I am displeased with them, for I think I was

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never

never in a sweeter place." "It is gratitude," answered Charlotte; "you feel a pleasing sensation, though it disposes you more to tears than mirth: this being to us quite a new situation, the sight of nature in so much beauty, charms us more than those who have been used to behold it all their lives, and perhaps this may be the only time we shall feel it so forcibly; a few more morning's walks and we may forget the beauties of it." "No, no," said Caroline, "I hope we never shall, are we ever to forget to be grateful? To be thankful you know is what our good mother teaches us daily, and in such a place as this, is it possible we should not profit by those instructions?" They now saw their father at a distance, with one of the little ones in each hand, and Mary with them, whom they advanced to meet: "Do you know," said Jane, running to her sisters, "that there is another garden beyond this, and all round that

that field ; on the other side of the ha-ha there is the sweetest walk ! it is a shrubbery, and that little rivulet runs across it, and there is a wooden bridge over it." She was continuing her description, when her father came up : " Well girls," said he, " I need not ask you how you like this place, I see by the faces of all, that you are pleased with it." " Who could be otherwise," said Charlotte, pressing his hand ? " how many times must we thank you, my dear father, for procuring us all this pleasure ?" " I am happy it has been in my power," said he, with an affectionate look, " but now let us go in to your mother, who is waiting breakfast for us." They all returned to the house, and Caroline carried a rose, which she laid on the table before Mrs. Nelson, " for," said she, " we have all gathered one, my dear mother, and I hope you will not be angry ; but they were so tempting and so beautiful, that I determined you should

have one too." Her mother smiled, and told her, "roses were not quite of such value there as in London, though much more beautiful; you have my permission," added she, "to gather as many as you like, and I thank you for this mark of attention." After they had breakfasted, the whole party proceeded to examine the house, and after going through every room, returned to the parlour, equally satisfied, and each made happy, by observing a variety of books, packed in the library, which Mr. Nelson had sent from London, before his departure. "To-morrow morning," said he to his daughters, "I must beg your assistance in placing these books in proper order; those belonging to you I shall consign to your room," which was a back parlour, and where the business of the morning was to go on, as in London. In the course of the next day they walked to a cottage, on the edge of the paddock, and where Mr. Nelson

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meant to settle the gardener, who had been employed by the former proprietor of the house, in that office, though he then lived at a village the other side of the hill. This man had married a servant of Mrs. Nelson's many years before, and they were glad to find people they knew so well to inhabit it: "here it is," said Mrs. Nelson, as they were returning home, "I mean to fix our little George, at least till he is old enough to learn something: you will not regret his leaving us, when at so short a distance!" "I am afraid," said Charlotte, "he is now so fond of Anne, that he will not be happy at first;" "but if Mrs. Cecil behaves kindly to him," said her mother, "which I have no doubt she will, he will soon be reconciled to the change." "O mama!" said Jane, who was running on before, "who could set this flower in a field? only look at it, and how sweet it smells." "It is a violet," answered Mrs. Nelson, "a com-

mon flower, though so very beautiful; do you not remember the hymn of Mrs. Barbauld's you learnt the other day? — 'These flowers are a part of God's works, and a little portion of his wonders!' — cannot you recollect it? My memory is better than yours, I believe, she continues thus — 'look at the thorns that are white with blossoms, and the flowers that cover the fields, and the plants that are trodden in the green path; the hand of man hath not planted them, the sower hath not scattered the seeds from his hand, nor the gardener digged a place for them with his spade.' Now mama," said Jane, "I very well remember it, it is a very pretty hymn, and if you please, I could repeat all of it; and so it is God who has set these flowers here, how good he is!" "In this and a thousand other instances," continued her mother, "we experience God's kindness, every field is like an open book, every painted flower hath a lesson written

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on its leaves ; they all speak of him who made us ; they all tell us he is very good : God puts these beauties here to make it pleasant to us, but innumerable are the blessings he daily bestows on us, not only in literally strewing our path with flowers, but in preserving us from many hidden dangers." By this time they reached the house, and their dinner was ready, to which they all sat down with good appetites and thankful hearts ; after dinner, little George was brought in, and Caroline kissing him, as she placed him on her lap, said, " Ah, my little fellow, we have this morning been to see your future habitation, and I hope you will like it as well as we do." The child smiled in her face, and held out his hands that he might occupy Mr. Nelson's knee, on one of which Charles was seated. " He shall come," said that benevolent man, and received him with a kiss ; the little boy laughed, and shared Charles's wine, who had

had so many things to tell his father, of what he had seen after he left him, that no one except himself could speak a word, "and there are some fowls, papa," said he, "I think Mary will like them, and some ducks, that go quack, quack, I don't like them at all; if I was mama, I would not keep them." Do you not recollect," said Mrs. Nelson, "what you thought so good at dinner the day before we left London?" "Yes," said he, "that was ducks, but not like those nasty ugly things in our yard." "Well," said his mother, "some one may take it into their head not to admire you, for you are not very pretty," added she, "and should you like your papa and me not to keep you, for that reason?" "No, to be sure, mama," answered he, "but then I am your own dear little Charles, and you love me dearly, I know." "That I do, indeed," said his father, and could by no means part with you:" Charles jumped down

down to kiss his mother, saying, "never mind it then, let the ducks stay, and I will not find fault with them any more." The girls soon asked permission to move, and Charles offered to shew them the poultry yard, which when they had sufficiently admired, they again joined their father and mother in the garden.

CHAP. VII.

“ High sunny summits, deeply shaded dales,
“ Thick mossy banks, and flow’ry winding vales,
“ With various prospects gratify the sight,
“ And scatter fix’d attention in delight.”

PARNELL.

AFTER they had completely settled their household, which fully employed them the first week, the whole family, except the two little boys, ascended the hill, one very fine morning. They were often obliged to rest as they toiled up the height, and while they were seated on some little hillocks, with which the side of the downs are spread, Mrs. Nelson repeated the following lines, which they found truly exemplified

ed in their own sensations, when at the
op:

Not distant now, ye mountains! I admire
Your form stupendous, but oft wish'd approach,
Early, while yet the noiseless village sleeps :
To gain your summit, season fit to rise
Above the level plain, so high in air.
No burning sun now vapours grey exhales
From humid meads, enveloping the view :
No winds yon cottage chimney's curling smoke
Disperse, or scarce disturb! The slender stems
Of hare-bells blue, are motionless and still.
The thistle down assumes its silv'ry wing,
As if to wanton with the morning breeze,
But to the ground unbuoyant soon descends :
Tranquillity the elements pervades,
And harmony the woods. No cloud obscures
The wide horizon's undulating line,
Where join'd seem earth and sky! Where azure
mist
Veils the soft landscape, melting into light!
This winding path, close cropt by nibbling sheep,
(Its end the summit!) now my steps pursue.
Keep earthward bent the eye,—forbearance wise ;
Diminishing by no impatient gaze

“ Its

“ Its pleas’d astonishment, when sudden bursts
“ The full, the wide circumference on its view !
“ When shall forbearance cease ?—my beating heart
“ Pants like an eager steed for liberty,
“ When sounds the trump to rush into the war.
“ Now level treads the foot !—the summit’s gain’d !
“ Great God of Nature ! These thy glorious
works ?
“ Almighty ! thine, this universal frame ! ”

At last they reached the summit, and great was the pleasure of all, on beholding the extensive prospect from thence ; the sea appeared beautiful, as the sun beams played on it, and many little vessels were spreading their sails to the wind. “ What a glorious sight,” said Charlotte, as she cast her eyes towards the water—“ can any thing be more worthy of admiration ! ”—“ and those who go to sea,” said Caroline, “ to have it always in their view, how charming ! ” “ It would be so,” said her father, “ if always like this, but you have read how changeable it is, though you have never seen it before ! ”

“ Yes,”

Yes," said Mary, "I remember a fable in my book to that purpose, of a shepherd who kept his flocks by the sea-side, and was tempted by the smoothness of its appearance to leave his sheep, and venture on it; but he soon found its fickleness, and was glad to return to his old employment." "Very well, Mary," said her mother, "you have given a very good account of that fable, and properly expressed your meaning." "I think," said Charlotte, "I should fear were in one of those ships, but they are not so large as I expected to see them." "You forget the distance you are from them," said Caroline; "but are they what are called men of war, papa?" added she. "O no!" answered Mr. Nelson, "those are mostly little fishing smacks; no ships of burden, I believe, come here; but Portsmouth and Plymouth are the places to see men of war; in the course of the summer, if possible, I will take you and Charlotte to the

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former place, as I wish to shew my children every thing worth their observation." "Thank you, my dear sir," said they, "it will give us great pleasure." "Look at our house!" said Mary, "how small it looks from this place; I dare say Charles cannot see us from the parlour windows." "It is distance makes this change," said her mother, "and so it does in many other things; we consider events we expect to be of more consequence than they really are, when they happen!" "And when, papa," asked Jane, "shall we go to Brighton? It seems to look pretty from hence, and being so near the sea, it must be very pleasant." "Not yet," said he; "when your brothers come home, perhaps we may take a ride there, but we must reserve some pleasures that they may partake with us."—"Undoubtedly!" said they all, and after taking another look all round, they left the spot they thought so charming, and descended
which

which they found much easier than the walk up the hill. The next day the young people were not so fatigued with their walk, but that they would have renewed it, had not their mother invited them to accompany her once more to the cottage:—"By this time," said she, "I should think Mrs. Carey is settled as well as ourselves, and I wish to talk to her of taking George, for he really begins to want more attendance than we can give him here in the country, where we have more to employ our servants." As they went across the paddock, they overtook two pretty little girls, who made them a curtsy:—"What is your name, my dears?" asked Mrs. Nelson—"Carey, ma'am," said the eldest. "O mamma," said Mary, "I dare say they belong to the woman we are going to see!" "Do you live at the cottage?" enquired her mother.—"Yes, ma'am, we do now!" said they, "but we used to live down t'other

side of the hill:”—“And which do you like best?”—“Why to be sure this is the best house, ma’am, and mother likes it best, but somehow or other it is not so comfortable for we.” The eldest then checked her sister, and dropping a low curtsy, said, “I beg your pardon, ma’am, for being so bold, but I think you be Mrs. Nelson, and indeed ma’am we be all much obliged to you for letting us live there; and if it was not so far to go to school every day, ma’am, I am sure my sister and I should like it very much.” They were now near the cottage, and Mrs. Carey called from within it, “Bless me, girls, come along, what a time you are!—who be talking to?—I wish you’d be a little quicker!” She then appeared at the door, and on seeing Mrs. Nelson begged a thousand pardons for calling out so:—“I am sure ma’am, I could not think it was you my girls were talking to, but they are so bold, that they don’t mind
conversing

conversing with any body—'twas not so when I was young—I was so shy I could hardly get a word out of my mouth." The good woman appeared to have entirely lost the silence of her youth, for she would scarcely allow Mrs. Nelson time to assure her the children had not behaved at all improperly. When entering the room she was pleased to see it furnished very neatly. "I see," said she, "you have not lost the love for neatness you had when a servant, Mrs. Carey, and yet with so large a family I should think it would be difficult for you to be always nice." "Indeed I do find it so, ma'am," said she, curtsying again, "but I makes my children as tidy as I can, and Bet there helps me very well in keeping things a little in order ; then I have two boys that are out at day-work for the farmers, but when they be at home I makes them work in the garden : do please to look out, ma'am, and see what a good piece of ground we

have got, which I dare say the boys will keep in as good order as what we have left." "Then you like this situation very well!" said Mrs. Nelson,—“to be sure I do, ma'am,” said she—“I never lived so comfortably before—do, ma'am, walk up stairs, and see what charming rooms we have—it is very lucky that we got settled, and put the things a little to rights, before you came—I am sure I think myself a very happy woman, and hope my husband will serve Mr. Nelson as well as he did the other gentleman, for though I say it myself, I do think he never got a word of complaint from him all the time he was his gardener, and that's a pretty many years, almost ever since we were married, and we can't be too thankful to you, ma'am, for speaking for us to live in this cottage; but how I keeps talking, and yet I be so happy I don't know how to say enough.” When they were once more down stairs, Mrs. Nelson enquired

quired where the children went to school—

“O ma’am, in the village where we lived before,” answered she, “for my husband likes they should have a little learning.”—

“But” said Mrs. Nelson, “it is a great way for them to walk!”—“What does that signify, ma’am, they carries their dinner along with them—I don’t have any notion of their being so very delicate, and I dare say when they goes out to service they will be more upon their feet.” Mrs. Nelson then

asked her if she should like an addition to her family, and mentioned the child she wished her to have the care of;—to this Mrs. Carey made no objection, but said it would be company for her, when her girls were at school.”—The terms were soon agreed on, and after giving her and her family an invitation to dinner the next Sunday, when she might get a little acquainted with her charge, Mrs. Nelson and the young ladies took their leave. When they had

had got a little way from the house, Mary expressed her astonishment to find Mrs. Carey so odd a woman:—"and how fast she talks, mama," added she:—"That," said her mother, was her only fault; but she was an excellent servant, and if I did not know her to be very good-natured, I would not place our little George with her." "When she comes on Sunday, mama," said Jane, "mayn't I ask the little girls up stairs, and shew them my playthings?"—"Why I don't know, my dear," said Mrs. Nelson, "it may perhaps make them wish for what they would never have thought of."—"But mama," interrupted Mary, "Jane and I have a great many playthings, and if you like, we will give them some."—"I can have no objection to that," answered she; "and it will make them very happy." The two girls then walked on, to consult on what they should part with; and Mrs. Nelson and her two eldest daughters were lost in admiration

ration of the scene around them. "How lovely the country is!" said Charlotte, "every thing appears rejoicing—I don't know how to express my happiness!" "Does it not remind you of part of Thomson's Seasons, we were reading last night?" said her mother? "can not you repeat a few of the lines?" "If I recollect them right," said Charlotte, "they were these:"

——— In these green days
Reviving sickness lifts her languid head;
Life flows afresh, and young eye'd health exalts
The whole creation round! Contentment walks
The sunny glade, and feels an inward bliss
Spring o'er his mind, beyond the power of kings
To purchase! Pure serenity apace
Induces thought, and contemplation still:
By swift degrees the love of nature works,
And warms the bosom; till at last sublim'd
To rapture and enthusiastic heat,
We feel the present Deity, and taste
The joy of God, to see a happy world."

It

"It is indeed," said Mr. Nelson, "what every one must feel, on beholding so delightful a prospect, and I know not any poet, who so charmingly describes the pleasure to be enjoyed in the country, as Thomson; every line of the Seasons, I think, is beautiful." They were now met by their father, who had, he told them, been riding over his grounds, and felt more than ever satisfied with his purchase. "If the girls are not tired," added he, "I should like to shew them what I think they will be much pleased with." — They were all eager to accompany him, and declared they could walk as far again: he then led them into the wood, and Mrs. Nelson returned to the house. — "What are we going to see, papa?" asked Jane, as she skipped by his side — "I think it is a fish pond!" He, smiling at her curiosity, told her "not to be inquisitive." — Still none of the party could help guessing — one thought it might be a grotto — another that

that it was a fountain:—till at last they entered by a winding path, on a round plat of grass, encircled by trees, and full of flowering shrubs: roses and honeysuckles appeared ready to burst their buds, and in the middle stood a rustic table:—"What a charming spot," said Charlotte, and Caroline was quite delighted—"what a nice place to bring our work or books to!" said she. "I wish mama had come with us, she would have been so pleased." Jane own'd that it was much prettier than a fish pond, and thanked her father for bringing them there. "One day or other," said he, "we will drink tea here, and when your brothers come home, it will be quite a treat to them:—" "And then," said Caroline, "the flowers will be more out:—see the lilac is in full bloom, and the liburnum is very near blowing." They left the place, equally charmed with it, and on their return, desired their mother to go and see it the first opportunity, and then

then Charles begged to accompany them; "for I think it is rather hard," added he, "that papa did not take me now!"—His father made an apology for not doing so, and the affront poor Charles had received was soon forgot.

CHAP. IX.

"Friendship and Love, his cottage guests, receive
him,

"With honest welcome, and a smile sincere!

"No threat'ning woes of present joys bereave him!

"No sigh his bosom owns, his cheek no tear."

LEWES.

THE next Sunday, Mrs. Carey and her family came to dinner, all dressed in their best clothes, and after using a few kind words, little George seemed very well inclined to go to her—She would not put him off her lap the whole day; and when he wanted any thing, it all came through her hands, that before the evening he became quite sociable with the good woman,—her husband he knew before, by having often seen him in the garden; and with the

I children

children he soon got acquainted:—yet if he heard Anne's voice, his eyes involuntarily turned towards her, and had she not suppressed the encouragement she wished to give him, he would have cried to go to her. After dinner, Mary and Jane took the little Careys to their play-room, which struck them with astonishment, as they had never seen so many fine things before; and when Mary and her sister presented them with what they thought they could well spare, they were completely happy, and went home full of the praises of the Miss Nelson's. In the evening, Mrs. Nelson would have thought it best for Mrs. Carey to take the little boy home with her, but the whole family petitioned so earnestly for him to stay one night longer, and Anne quite wept at the thought of parting with him, that she consented for Mrs. Carey to come again in the morning for him.—I have not kissed him to-day," said Jane; "and if I had
thought

thought of his going so soon, I could not have let him stay so quietly down stairs."—"Remember," said Mrs. Nelson, "he may often visit us, when he is at the cottage, and I beg that to-morrow when he leaves us, you will none of you let him see your grief at the parting, or he will think some misfortune is to happen to him, and Mrs. Carey will then find it hard to reconcile him to the change." All the girls went for the last time to see him put to-bed. "I hope," said Anne, as she laid him down, "Mrs. Carey will behave kindly to him, but I dare say he will not have such a nice bed to sleep on, and then if she lays him down awake, it will make him cry so, to be in a strange house—poor little fellow, I should like to go with him." They all joined in wishing him to stay where he was, "but," said Jane, "we could not part with you, Anne, indeed—to lose two favourites would be very bad." Anne then

opened the drawers, and after looking over all his clothes, and giving a sigh to each piece, she tied it up in a bundle, for Mrs. Carey to take with her the next morning—the young ladies returned to the parlour, and after Charles was gone to bed, Caroline repeated the following verses to her mother, as they had now almost made it a constant rule to write some little piece of poetry every evening.

THE GARLAND.

THE pride of ev'ry grove I chose;
The violet sweet, and lily fair;
The dappled pink, and blushing rose,
To deck my charming Chloe's hair.

At morn the nymph vouchsaf'd to place
Upon her brow the blushing wreath;
The flow'rs less blooming than her face;
The scent less fragrant than her breath.

The flow'rs she wore along the day;
And ev'ry nymph and shepherd said,
That in her hair they look'd more gay
Than glowing in their native bed.

Undrest

Undrest at ev'ning, when she found
Their odours lost, their colours past;
She changed her look, and on the ground
Her garland and her eye she cast.

That eye dropp'd sense distinct and clear,
As any muse's tongue could speak;
When from its lid a pearly tear,
Ran trickling down her beauteous cheek.

She sigh'd, she smil'd, and to the flow'rs
Pointing, the lovely mor'lif said,
'See friend, in some few fleeting hours,
See yonder what a change is made.

'Ah me! the blooming pride of may,
And that of Beauty are but one:
At morn both flourish bright and gay;
Both fade at ev'ning, pale and gone.

'At dawn poor Stella danc'd and sung;
Th' admiring youths around her bow'd;
At night her fatal knell was rung:
I saw and kiss'd her in her shroud.

'Such as she is who dy'd to-day;
Such I, alas! may be to-morrow
Go, Damon! bid thy muse display
The justice of thy Chloe's sorrow.'

The next morning according to appointment, Mrs. Carey came, to whom, with stifled sighs and many kisses, Anne resigned her little favourite; who not forgetting her kindness to him the day before, seemed to rejoice in again seeing her. Mrs. Nelson had him into the parlour, and giving him one kiss, and allowing the girls to do the same, she again repeated to Mrs. Carey her dependance on her taking care of him: "That, ma'am," said the good woman, you may be sure of, and I assure you, all my children are glad he is coming among us; and my husband says he shall love him as if he was one of his own." She then took her leave, as the young ladies' music-master was arrived: their attention to him in some measure dissipated their gloom, at losing their little plaything, and after he had left them, the servant brought a letter to Charlotte, from Miss Rivers, in answer to one she had sent her, soon after their arrival

val in the country:—this quite raised all their spirits, and after a slight perusal to herself, Charlotte read it aloud—it was as follows.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

“WE were all very happy to hear your journey was so agreeable, and that you are so much pleased with your situation in the country; I assure you I thought of you at the time I supposed you would arrive at Eason House, and imagined how eager you would all be to catch the first glimpse: I think you must, at the sight of the beauties of the country, feel as we did, when we went for the first time to the play; yet if possible, your pleasure must be now greater, because you consider it as to last so much longer:—this is what my mama says, and I too well remember the happiness I enjoyed in the country when younger not to agree with her,—We all feel your loss very much, though Miss Barham, who
called

called here the other day, said, when I lamented your absence, that she thought losing one family from town was nothing at all, there were so many to supply their loss; but she did not consider how few we visit; and none that we love equal to our dear Charlotte and Caroline. Anne desires me to say, the wax doll is very well, and sends her love to your sister Jane; and that the bonnet she was so good as to send her is still the best, and will be so till you return, which both the doll and its mother wish for very much. How does your little foundling do? By this time perhaps he has left you—the country air must, I think, make him look more healthy than ever; and my dear Charles, does not he enjoy running about the nice gardens you tell me of? I cannot suppose but that all the family, even to the Canary bird, are pleased with the change; and yet I find it difficult not to lament it.—London is growing quite disagreeable—was not our
house

house in the square, and the garden behind it, for a town one rather large, we should not be able to support the heat in the middle of summer;—you will find it warm in the country, and perhaps more so than you ever did here, though I dare say at this time you will scarcely believe me.—Your brothers will soon be coming home to join your party; then how happy you will be! —I will endeavour to rejoice in your happiness, and not to regret you are in the only place where you could spend your time so pleasantly.—I am obliged to conclude, but hope I shall hear again from you very soon. Mama writes to Mrs. Nelson by this post: —we all unite in love to you and your sisters; and believe me, my dear Charlotte,

Your affectionate friend,

E. RIVERS."

The little boy found none but friends at the cottage—the girls, who did not go to school that day, received him with great joy:

joy:—the eldest prepared his dinner for him, and before the evening he had entirely forgot his friends at Eason House. When the boys came home from their work, he soon got acquainted with them; and appeared already as if he had been one of the family a long time.—Just as Mrs. Carey was thinking of putting him to bed, her husband entered. — “ Well, where’s our little George,” said he—poor Anne has been talking to me of him, every time I have been in doors to-day; and if you believe me, I thought she would have cried after the poor child:—then little master Charles came up to me in the garden, to tell me he was come, and hoped I would not use him ill—Mr. Nelson was in the garden too, and told him he need not fear that—no more he may, “ for we’ll take care of ye my boy,” added he, taking him in his arms, and giving him a hearty kiss.—“ Yes,” said his wife, “ it shall never be said I did not do

my

my duty by any child put under my care, and particularly this little fatherless and motherless baby." "Come let him set awhile on my knee," said the kind-hearted man, "he does not want to go to-bed yet, I am sure." The child seemed to assent by his smiles to what he said, and willingly took the place he allotted him; though it was not long he occupied it, for on his beginning to cry—"there, said Mrs. Carey, that's the first time I have heard him cry since he has been in the house, and I am sure he wants to go to bed: besides, Anne told me he always went early." She then carried him up stairs, and as soon as his head was on the pillow he fell asleep, though it was in a strange bed, and had Anne seen him, she would have been quite satisfied that he slept comfortably.

CHAP. X.

"To double all thy pleasure in thy child."

COWPER.

"I think," said Mrs. Nelson to her husband, as they were one day walking in the garden, where, indeed, they spent most of their time, "we might have William and Edward home a little before the holidays commence: dear boys, I long to see them, and they will enjoy themselves so much more here than when in London."—"Yes," said Mr. Nelson, "it wants but a little more than a fortnight to the vacation, and I think John may as well be sent for them: I should like to see all my family happy together

gether before I leave them, which must be, I believe, in a short time."—"What are you talking of?" asked Caroline, who came to enquire the name of a flower she had just gathered; "may I hope it is about my brother's coming home; we only want them to be compleatly happy."—"You are nearly right," answered her mother, "for that was the subject, and I hope you will see them soon." She then related the plan of sending for them the next day, and Caroline was in such a hurry to give her sisters the agreeable intelligence, that she quite forgot the errand she came on, and returned with the flower still in her hand: when she entered the summer-house where Charlotte was sitting, Mary was repeating some lines to her sister, which her mother had given her to get by heart. "You say them very perfect," said Charlotte, "and may in the evening let mama hear you: but what is the name of the flower, Caro-

K

line?"

line?"—"I forgot to ask;" she answered, "but I have better news to tell you; William and Edward are to come home a fortnight before we expected them."—"When, when?" eagerly enquired both.—"I believe the day after to-morrow," said she, "papa is so good."—"Indeed he is," said Charlotte: at that moment Charles came from the field crying.—"What is the matter?" said his sisters.—"Why Jane has broke my bow," said he, "and she is very cross; I desired her to give it me, and she would not." Jane followed him, eager to justify herself—"Indeed, sister," said she, "I only wanted to shoot off one more arrow, and he would not let me, and pulled it out of my hand, and so he broke it"—"No, 'twas you broke it," said he, "for you held it so tight, and I'll never let you play with any of my things any more; remember that."—"And, indeed, I don't want it," said Jane. — "Fie, fie," interrupted

rupted Charlotte, "you are both naughty children, but you," added she, turning to her sister, "should have let him have it, as he is so much younger than you"—"And so he is to be humoured in every thing," said Jane, with a toss of her head; she would have continued her speech, but on perceiving her father at a distance, she walked away, being conscious she had behaved rather wrong; Charles was going immediately to tell his papa, but Charlotte stopped him, by saying, "He was not a good boy himself, and certainly would be more naughty if he told of his sister's fault, because," added she, "you would not like me, or any body else, to tell of you when you behave ill; besides, I have something better to talk to you of: William and Edward are to come home soon." This intelligence cooled his resentment in a minute, and he flew to ask his father when he should send John for them.

In the evening, Mary repeated the following verses inscribed on a small cottage, intended as a place of retirement, and gained great praise by her manner of saying it :

Stay, passenger, and tho' within,
Nor gold, nor glitt'ring gems are seen,
To strike thy dazzled eye :
Yet enter, and thy ravish'd mind
Beneath this humble roof shall find,
What gold will never buy.

Within this solitary cell
Calm thought, and sweet contentment dwell,
Parent of bliss sincere :
Peace spreads around her balmy wings,
And banish'd from the court of kings,
Has fix'd her mansion here.

The rest of the time was devoted to music, and before the younger girls went to bed, it was agreed on, if the next morning was fine, they should before breakfast take Anne with them, and fetch little George from the cottage, where he had now been nearly

nearly a week: this proposal gave them great pleasure, and Charles gladly rose earlier than usual to accompany them. When they entered the house, they found the family at breakfast; George was sitting on Mrs. Carey's knee, but on seeing Anne, was ready to spring into her arms. The whole family rose at their entrance; "Don't let us disturb you," said Charlotte, "I am afraid we are come at an inconvenient time."—"Oh, no, ma'am," said the good woman curtsying, "not at all, only we breakfast rather late this morning; my husband has been at work, and did not come home so soon as he does sometimes—but won't you be pleased to sit down, ladies?—Here, Bet, move the table"—"No, pray don't," said Charlotte, "we are only come to take your little nursery away for a little while." George seemed almost to understand her, for he smiled, and in his own language thanked her. Mary and Jane

had got the two little girls into a corner by themselves, and were giving them an old doll of which Jane was tired, and with which they were highly pleased: their mother told them to make their very best curtsy — “Indeed, miss, you are very good,” said she, “and I am sure my children are much obliged to you, for what you give them t’other day; you see, miss, where I have put it,” pointing to the shelf, where Mary saw the two or three doll’s cups and saucers they had given the children when at their house, placed in great order:—“I am afraid it is out of their reach,” said she, “and I intended they should have it to play with.”—“O, dear miss,” said Mrs. Carey, “any thing does for they to throw about, and I think it looks very pretty up there; but, ladies, I begs your pardon; I dare say you are in a hurry, so I’ll put on my little boy’s hat, and he seems to want to go too,—not but
what

what I do assure you, ladies, he is very happy here ; I don't think he has cried more than once since he has been in the house ; only to be sure, when he sees any of you, or Mrs. Anne, it is natural for him to like to come to you." She then put him into Anne's arms, who gladly received him, and after Mary had desired the little girls might have the doll to play with, and keep it in their own possession, they left them, reminding Mrs. Carey to come in the evening to fetch home her charge. Charles ran by his side the whole way home, and George seemed equally glad to see all his old acquaintance once more. When Mrs. Nelson saw him, he recollected her, and she was pleased to see he did not appear neglected by Mrs. Carey, and the dependance she had on her was not ill placed. Jane told her mama the little anecdote of the play-things, and it was settled that no more should be given them ;—"for," said Mary,

"if

“if Mrs. Carey means to ornament her house with it, it is not worth while.” Mr. Nelson then came into the room, with a letter in his hand—“this,” said he, “I am going to send for your brothers; John will go to Brighton to-day, and the day after to-morrow you may expect to see them.” The girls joined in sincerely thanking him—“And I am sure they would too,” said Mary, “if they were here, for I dare say they long to be in this sweet place. The rest of the day was entirely given up to the amusement of little George, who, though he seemed much pleased with their attention, did not appear less so on returning with Mrs. Carey in the evening, which was a sufficient proof she had behaved kindly to him.

CHAP. XI.

“To youth the tenderest regard is due.”

THE next morning Mr. Nelson reminded his wife of some visits she had to pay.—“Don’t you remember,” said he, “that Lady Mortonson called nearly a fortnight ago; we shall be out of her good graces, if you do not return it soon, though by our not being at home, we lost the pleasure of seeing her then: from what I discovered yesterday, when I called on Sir Joseph, I can find she stands much upon ceremony.”—“Then,” said Mrs. Nelson, “I will go this morning, and as there is a young lady, Charlotte and Caroline shall call too; but I know of no one else

else except the clergyman's wife, Mrs. Hunt, that I owe a visit to; and from what I have seen of her, I think I shall like her acquaintance very much, but, as for my lady"—"I am sure," interrupted Charlotte, "I shall not like Miss Mortonson, she looked so very affected last Sunday at church;"—"Well," said her mother, "we will draw no hasty conclusions, but if you will order the coach by twelve, go and see what sort of people they are." At that hour the three ladies ascended the carriage, which, as it lay in their way to Sir Joseph's, was ordered to stop at Mr. Hunt's first. When they were seated in it, Caroline said, "I feel myself very awkward at this business; I never paid any visit before, except to Mrs. Rivers; what shall I do? how am I to behave?"—"As you would at home," said her mother, "there is little to do, but to walk in, and after talking a little, walk out again." The coach now stopped at
Mr.

Mr. Hunt's, which was a small neat house near the church: they were shewn into the parlour, where Mr. Hunt was sitting with three or four of his children, whom he appeared to have been teaching, as their books lay on the table, just put out of their hands: he received them with politeness, and sent a little boy to call his mother, who, when she entered, welcomed her visitors as if she had been used to company, though not lately. The conversation, as may be supposed, was rather confined; the weather, which is the general topic when no other can be found, was the first, and after Mrs. Nelson had admired the healthy looks of her children, and enquired of Mrs. Hunt the number of her family, they began to be at a loss, till Mr. Hunt asked the young ladies—"if they were reconciled to the change of the pleasures of London for those in the country;" they readily answered, "it was a change they
much

much wished for, and that they had found no pleasure in town equal to what they had enjoyed since they had left it." After a little more conversation of this sort, and Mrs. Nelson saying she should be happy to see Mr. and Mrs. Hunt, they left them much pleased with the whole family. Their next visit was to a very different house; its appearance was as opposite to the one they had left, as the inhabitants proved to be: after going through many apartments, Mrs. and the Miss Nelson's were introduced to Lady Mortonson and her daughter; the young lady had just risen from the piano, and her mother appeared quite unemployed; she received her visitors with great form, and on Mrs. Nelson expressing her sorrow that she was not at home when she called, her ladyship begged she would not mention it—"You know, ma'am," added she, "people in our line of life are soon acquainted; an introduction is scarcely necessary,

necessary, except for people in an inferior situation." Mrs. Nelson felt already disgusted with her new acquaintance, and found it difficult to frame an answer that would not shew it: the young lady eyed her daughters with disdain, but after her ladyship had condescendingly conversed with them for a little while, and the silver salver, which the servant had brought in with chocolate and other refreshments, had gone out again untouched, she turned to her daughter, saying—"Almeria, if the young ladies like it, you can shew them the garden"—"certainly, mama," answered she, and rising, rang the bell. Charlotte and Caroline seeing from a look of their mother's, she thought it right they should accept of this civility, arose and waited her leisure.—"I am sorry to keep you standing," said the young lady, "but I cannot go out without my hat—I wonder why John does not come," and pulling the bell.

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more

more violently than before, the man appeared, whom she ordered to tell Walker to bring her hat, handkerchief, and parasole. Charlotte, who felt her pride a little hurt at the contemptuous manner in which she was treated both by mother and daughter, now determined to exert herself, and let them see, as was really the case, she did not mind it; she therefore with an appearance of ease walked to the table on which lay two or three books, and on opening one found it a novel:—"Oh, my dear creature," said Miss Almeria, who now began to unbend a little, "have you read that? it is the most fascinating thing in the world." Charlotte coolly replied, "She had not," and the lady's maid at that time coming, Almeria took her *outward attire*, as she fantastically termed it, and when she had for a moment viewed herself in the glass,—“Now,” said she, “ladies, I am ready to attend you; we will not go far

far enough to tire your young people, Mrs. Nelson ;" and away she tripped, saying, " I am above the common forms of politeness, so I go first ; besides, I have to shew you the way." After being led through the same range of apartments as they passed to get to the room they were sitting in, she conducted them into the garden, which was really a very elegant one, and laid out in a stile far superior to any either Charlotte or Caroline had seen before. " Well, but my dear," said Almeria, " I think I enquired if you had read that delightful book you saw just now ? it is a charming thing, I really do not know many like it—are you not fond of reading ? I think nothing so well occupies the time, which otherwise hangs so heavy on hand, when in the country—dear me ! I cannot open my parasole ; pray try for me, my dear creature !" giving it into the hands of Caroline—" I am so stupid ! in general Walker does it before

she gives it me, or some of the men I am walking with." Caroline returned it open to her; but it was impossible for either her or her sister to speak a word, for though she asked so many questions, this voluble lady never waited for an answer; the truth was, that in her mother's presence she had but few opportunities of speaking, and therefore, when absent from her, she thought herself privileged to talk as much as she could. She led them to the conservatory, which was adjoining the other wing of the house; here she offered them any flowers they liked, but as she went to call the gardener to cut them, she saw a gentleman in the opposite walk, and exclaiming, "Oh, there's Captain Brown, I must speak to him; he is come from town, and perhaps can tell me of my dear Maria; pray excuse me;" she ran towards him, leaving her companions in dumb surprize; they saw her seize his hand, and instead of returning

to them, appeared to walk quite a different way. "Is not this strange?" said Caroline, "I never saw such an odd girl in my life"—"I never saw one so affected," said her sister:—"I wonder whether she will come back," resumed Caroline, "I should think mama would be glad to go home, and I am sure I should; let us go in, for I dare say she won't return to us." After looking both ways, and seeing nothing of the lady, they shut the door, and walked towards the house. "This is certainly a very pretty place," said Charlotte, "and I must own," added she in a whisper, "I like the house better than its inhabitants." They had now reached the garden door, but recollected they should be quite at a loss to find out the room they had left—"There are so many to go through," said Charlotte, "that I think it impossible for us to distinguish one from the other; we had better stay here a little while." Presently

Miss Almeria appeared at the lower end of the green turf, leaning on the arm of the gentleman she was so eager to see, and on perceiving them, she led him that way, saying, "my dear girls, I have been looking all over the garden for you; why did you leave the conservatory? I meant to have returned in an instant, but Captain Brown drew me another way, and to hear of a friend, you will, I know, excuse it: but let me introduce you to each other—Captain Brown, these are the Miss Nelson's; Captain Brown, ladies; but, do you wish to go in? let me shew you the way." All this she spoke in a minute, hardly giving herself time to breathe; and continued talking to the gentleman till they entered the apartment, where Mrs. Nelson was earnestly wishing for her daughters to come, that she might take her leave of lady Mortonson, whom she found quite as ridiculous as Miss Almeria, though in a different manner.

manner. The young lady burst into the room—"Oh, mama, here is Capt. Brown:" and her mother immediately rose to welcome him, and by his reception, Mrs. Nelson discovered he was a man of consequence, though his appearance was very insignificant. Miss Almeria seemed to have left her rage for talking on the other side of the door, for she silently rung the bell for Walker to take her things. On the servant's appearing, Mrs. Nelson ordered her carriage to be drawn up, and when it was announced, gladly went through the ceremony of leave-taking, and departed as sick of the parade and ostentatious discourse of the mother, as her daughters were of the affectation of Miss Almeria. "I hope," said Charlotte, when they were at some distance from the house, "we shall not meet that family often."—"No;" said Mrs. Nelson, "we do not seem at all suited to each other; I was never more tired of
a visit

a visit than this, and as Lady Mortonson stands so much upon etiquette, I cannot ask her to my house first, and hope she is not enough pleased with us to invite us there." They were soon in their own comfortable parlour, and on their telling Mr. Nelson how different they found their two new acquaintances, — "I will not so affront your understandings," said he, "as to ask which you are most pleased with; but, as likings and dislikes are generally reciprocal, I think we shall not be much troubled with the society of the latter." — "I think the young lady rather pretty though," said Charlotte, "but so very fantastical that it quite spoils her face." — "I have been learning a few lines," replied Mary, "since you went, which I think, as you say she wishes to be thought handsome, we had better send her, then she may know what *real beauty* is." — "Repeat it," said her mother, "and I hope, Caroline, you will not

not neglect learning that piece you mentioned yesterday, that we may hear it to-night." On her saying she was nearly perfect in it, Mary repeated the following lines ;

REAL BEAUTY.

THE diamond's and the ruby's blaze,
Disputes the palm with beauty's queen ;
Not beauty's queen commands such praise,
Devoid of virtue, if she's seen.
But the soft tear in pity's eye
Outshines the diamond's brightest beams ;
And the sweet blush of modesty,
More beauteous than the ruby seems.

The day passed without any remarkable occurrence, and at the usual time, Caroline repeated the following beautiful

ODE TO HEALTH.

DAUGHTER of exercise! at whose command
Mirth spreads a smile upon the cheek of ease,
At whose rekindling breath,
Sickness looks up, and lives,

Say I

Say! where (for much thy haunts I long to woo,) Shall I thy joy-infusing presence hail?

Amidst what sylvan scenes,
Or unfrequented plains?

Say! when the roseate finger of the morn
Points out the glories of her short-liv'd reign;

Shall I thy steps pursue,
Climbing the mountain's side;

From whose tall brow, in eminence superb,
Fair nature views her fruitful vales below,

While Phœbus darts around
Her oriental eyes?

Or shall I trace thy vestige o'er the heath,
Where, in derision of the florist's aid

Shoots up, untaught by art,
The voluntary flow'r.

For well 'tis known, that oft' upon the heath,
In contemplation, devious art thou seen;

Or panting up the steep
Of unimprinted hill.

Or when cool evening, in floating vest,
Sweeps o'er the lawns, diffusing shady pomp,
And bids the sun recline
On Amphitrite's breast;

I will attend thee to the solemn grove,
Where love stands register'd on ev'ry tree,
Where the rook rocks his young,
And echo learns to caw.

Or standing on the margin of the stream,
I will survey thee on the passive wave,
Then press the liquid bed
To meet thy Naiad kiss.

O tell me, nymph, thy chosen residence;
Be it on mountain top, or forest wild,
And I will consecrate
A temple to thee there.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

"In happy concert let us sing,
"For why should silence reign,
"To press the joys that inward spring,
"And hope of home restrain?"

DULCE DOMUM.

THE happy day was now come on which they expected their brothers, and the whole morning was spent in talking of them. "I wonder," said Jane, "if Edward will play at battledore and shuttlecock with me as he did the last holidays; but here we may employ ourselves better, for we can run races in the garden."—"What, a girl run races!" said Charles, "I never heard such a thing; my brothers will play with me to be sure, and if we let you bring us the ball when we are at cricket, you may think it a great favour."—"I dare say I shall,"

"I shall," answered Jane; "William and Edward must be very much altered if they will not let me play with them in a better way than that." Mrs. Nelson now interrupted their conversation, as she feared it would produce a quarrel, by telling them not to doubt their brothers would do all in their power to please both—"And you must do the same by them," added she.—"I am sure," said Caroline, "if I was a boy, I would contrive a hundred ways to amuse them, but what can a poor girl do?"—"Don't be afraid, Caroline," said her father, "that your brothers will want amusement; the little horses which I have bought for them will, I dare say, afford them much pleasure."—"You have not been so good as to buy each of them a horse, my dear papa," said Charlotte, "how very kind!"—"Indeed it is," said Mrs. Nelson, "and will be a very agreeable surprise to them."—"Remember, papa, we are to

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drink

drink tea in the wood when they come home," said Jane, "and I hope it will be before you leave us"—"We carried mama there the other day," continued Mary, "and she was very much pleased with it"—"And so am I, papa," said Charles, "and I think William and Edward must like it; they have no such place at school, I'll answer for it." In the evening, before they expected, the boys arrived, and ran into the room where the family were sitting: "Here they are," burst from every mouth: "How do ye do, my dear brothers," and "my dear boys," were repeated a dozen times before any answer could be heard: "Upon my word," said William, "we are very well, but you won't give us time to tell you so. I hope you are the same:"—"My dear mother," said Edward, "how are you?" They then received an affectionate embrace from the whole party, and their sisters began to think of offering them chairs.

chairs. "Well, my dear boys," said their father, "you are not sorry, I hope, at being called away a little before the holidays"— "Not very," said William with a smile, "to be sure we lost the pleasure of singing *dulce domum*, but we both think it a much greater one to be with you"— "And in such a pretty place too," added Edward, "I think we shall be ten times more sorry when the holidays are over than we used to be in London; for, to tell you the truth, we did not so much mind leaving that smoky place." — "Dear Edward," said Charlotte, "let us not talk of parting the first evening; you are but just come home, and have six weeks to stay yet."—"So we have," answered William, "and we will enjoy them too." The supper was soon brought in, and all the younger ones, even to Charles, partook of it: when seated at the table, he began to speak as though he talked so much of his brothers before they

came, he seemed almost afraid when he first saw them, and would scarcely answer either when they spoke to him : it was not long before they got acquainted, and all enjoyed themselves greatly, after another happy hour, in which they made an agreement to rise early the next morning, when the girls were to shew their brothers the garden and shrubbery ; the family separated for the night. The boys arose with the sun, dressed themselves in a moment, and thinking it too early to call their sisters, flew with eagerness down stairs, to examine every part of the yards and stables ; the first object which attracted their attention was Juba, a beautiful spaniel which came with the family from London, and seemed by its fawning on William, to recollect his old master : they then hastened to the stables, where John was already feeding and cleaning Smiler, their father's horse, who seemed to improve on his country keeping;

keeping; and farther on William was surprised to see a little poney tied to the manger. "Dear John," said he, "whose horse is this? papa surely has not bought it? if he has, it certainly is intended for us to ride."—"Why, to tell you the truth," said John, "you have hit the right nail on the head, for I believe it is for you, but you must not say I told you, for I fancy master means to give ye what they calls an agreeable surprise."—"Oh," said Edward, "we won't tell; how delightful it will be to ride out with papa, and I suppose I may ride it sometimes."—"Yes, yes," said John, "you don't think master means to favour one more than t'other? if you look into the next stall, you will find it true what I say."—"I declare," said Edward, jumping for joy, "here is another, and that I dare say is for me, huzza! how glad I am."—"So am I," said John, "but I am terribly afraid you won't be surprised
M 3 enough,

enough, and then master will think I told you coming home:" so saying, he continued his employment in a great bustle, and after the boys had visited the horses belonging to the carriage, and looked over every part of the stable-yard, they thought it time to call their sisters for their walk in the shrubbery. When they reached the house, they found them just come down stairs, and enquiring of the servants for them.—"Oh!" said Caroline, "you have played us rather a shabby trick."—"Indeed," said William, "we have only been into the stable, where you know young ladies don't often visit; besides, we thought it too early to call you from your beds." This matter was soon amicably settled, and the whole party proceeded to the garden in great good humour. William mentioned the pleasing discovery he had made in the stable of the two poneys, and on having which the girls congratulated them, saying—

saying—"My father bought them only last week, and you cannot think how anxious he was they should be sent home before you came, that you might, if you pleased, ride out the first day."—"I believe we shall make no objection to that," said Edward, "and if papa wants a companion to ride with him, he may now have two." They were soon shewn every part of the garden, and Jane insisted on their each taking a flower from her's, which was in very great order, as Carey often assisted her in keeping it so; after which, they walked round the shrubbery, stopping every minute to observe something or another which drew their observation: Juba accompanied them all the way, but on their return to the house, retired to the stable, as he knew his province too well to attempt following them within the door. At breakfast, the boys expressed their thanks to their father, for the purchase he had made for them, and
received

received an invitation to take a ride with him that morning.—“The day after tomorrow,” added he, “I am obliged to go to town on business, and must stay a week; then you may ride with John, or rather he with you; but I need not, I hope, remind you, you owe some attention to your mother and sisters, and therefore will not let this new pleasure engross all your time.”

They readily promised this, and till the horses were brought round did not leave the parlour, but were fully employed in examining their sister’s drawings. Edward, who from a child discovered a great genius for that art, now produced his, and was pleased to hear his father thought him improved: when the horses were at the door, all the girls ran to see them mount, and followed them with their eyes till they were out of sight. “I hope,” said Charles, after he had seen them set off, “they will enjoy their ride; some little boys would

cry

cry to go with them, but I am too much of a man; besides, I heard papa say to William, that when they came home, I should ride one of their horses a little way." This was enough to make Charles happy, and as his father had promised, on their return, he was carefully placed on Edward's poney by John, who walked by his side for near a quarter of a mile, and at dinner Charles talked of the ride he had taken with as much pleasure, as his brothers did of theirs. In the evening, Mr. and Mrs. Nelson walked with their children till it was nearly dark, and in their way home called at the cottage, to introduce little George to the boys, who had heard his history from their sisters, and were desirous of seeing him: they found him as usual in high spirits, and Mrs. Carey employed in mending his clothes—"For," said she, "ma'am, do you know, he begins to run about now, and can go alone, and if he does fall he don't

don't mind it—but bless me, these be'ant master William and master Edward, are they, ma'am? I should not have known them.” On Mrs. Nelson's saying they were her sons, she again expressed her astonishment, saying—“When I took the liberty of calling on you, ma'am, in town, I don't know how many years it was ago, but 'twas when my brother died, and I was forced to leave my children, and go to settle some business about him; why, then, gentlemen,” addressing herself to the boys, you was not much older than this little fellow,” pointing to George, who had crept up to Caroline, and was smiling in her face. After they had each held him a little while in their arms, and the boys, who could hardly forbear laughing, had answered as well as they could all Mrs. Carey's enquiries, they returned home, and their sisters the rest of the evening endeavoured to entertain them with music.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

"Where round yon ample board in due degree,
"We sweeten'd every meal with social glee;
"The heart's light laughter crown'd the circling
 jest,
"And all was sun-shine, in each little breast."

ROGERS.

DAY after day passed in this happy manner, and though they were all sorry to part with their father, at his return they could not suppose he had been gone a week, so happily did they spend their time. One afternoon they drank tea in the wood, a pleasure the girls had long thought of, and as the weather was then fine, they would not wait till their father came back, but with their mother's permission ordered tea-things to be carried to the place appointed,

pointed, where they spent a very pleasant evening; the girls sung a few songs, and after they had drank tea they went round the wood to look for nuts, and not considering it was much too early for any to be worth gathering: their mother continued at the table with her work, and when the young folks again joined her, they were surprised to see a large bowl of syllabub before her: this was what they had never seen or heard of, and were impatient to know what it was—"You will taste it," said Mrs. Nelson, "and tell me how you like it." She then filled a cup for each, which when they had drank, they were still more desirous of knowing the name of so excellent a thing—"you must thank Anne for this treat," said their mother, "for, though in my younger days, I have often partook of one; I should never have thought of this, had not she mentioned it, thinking you would like it."—

"She

"She thought very right," said William, "and so I will tell her ; she shall judge for us another time, shall not she, girls?" — "Yes, indeed" said Charlotte — "But," interrupted Charles, "you must thank the cow likewise for some part of it, for I saw John drive her to the edge of the wood, and Molly milked her into the bowl" — "Very true, Charles," said Mrs. Nelson, "you seem to know how it is made better than any of the party ; but you must not take too much of it, or it will make you forget every thing you have done to-night, therefore beware." — "What ! will it make us tipsy, mama ?" asked the little boy, — "Indeed it will," answered she, "however you shall have a little more, and then gather me a few flowers before you go home." The boys were much pleased with this part of the entertainment, and after spending another half hour in a fruitless search for ripe nuts, they all returned to

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the house, equally pleased with the novelty of the evening. After their father's return, their next excursion was to Brighton: Mrs. Nelson and the three eldest girls went in the carriage, and the boys accompanied their father on horseback. They left their carriage and horses at an hotel, and walked to the Steine: the young ones were charmed with the extensive view of the sea from thence, and the variety of company walking there: they went into many shops, and the boys bought toys for Charles, and other things for themselves, till they spent all the money they had. Charlotte and Caroline expressing a wish for some new music, their father took them to a music shop, and paid for what they chose: as they passed a milliner's, Charlotte went in only to buy a ribbon for Anne, but when there, so many things were shewn them, and they were all so pretty, that they, like their brothers, found all the money tempted out
of

of their pockets. Mary was not allowed to buy any thing but what she absolutely wanted, and when they were at home, she felt herself obliged to her mother for not giving her permission to do more, for her sisters, when they opened their purchases, found few things useful. "This hat," said Caroline, "when am I to wear it? it is much too fine to exhibit at church, I wish I had not bought it; but the woman talked so much of its being fashionable, and said it was so much worn, that I hardly knew what I did; I cannot think how I could be so foolish."—"Not more so than me," said Charlotte, "for I am sure this bandeau I shall never wear." In short, they repented of every thing they had bought, except a pair of gloves and a fan for each, and the ribbon for Anne. Mrs. Nelson came into their room while they were blaming themselves for their folly; she was not sorry to find they thought it

so, and said—"I considered you old enough to judge for yourselves, and therefore did not restrain you in the purchases you made; and now this will be a warning to you, not to buy what you do not want, because the milliner tells you it is pretty or fashionable."—"Indeed it will, mama," said Charlotte; "I shall never like to go into one of their shops again, but I am sorry to find I have so little resolution."—"You will not, I dare say, be so easily persuaded again," said her mother, "and there is no instructor like experience."—"It is paying very dear for it though," said Caroline, "for I am sorry to say, I have spent all I had left of my quarter's allowance, except a very few shillings."—"I am afraid I have too," said her sister, as they followed their mother to the dining parlour; there they found their brothers presenting Charles with what they had bought for him, though they too made the same complaint of having spent all their money,

money, without having much to shew for it. William wished he had not gone—"for though it is a pretty place," said he, "if I am so foolish as not to be able to keep the money in my pocket, I don't want to go again till I am old enough to do so." Their father gave them much the same advice, and told them—"He hoped they would keep their resolution." As they dined later that day than usual, they did not walk in the evening, but the girls opened their packet of music, for which they thanked their father, and acknowledged he knew better how to dispose of money than they did. Caroline was for trying some of the new songs, but William desired her not to hammer at them till the next morning, "rather," said he, "sing that favourite song of Edward's and mine."—"If you please," she replied, and immediately did as he desired.

S O N G.

ENJOY, my child, the balmy sleep,
Which o'er thy form new beauty throws;
And long thy tranquil spirit keep
A stranger to thy mother's woes!

Tho' in distress

I feel it less,

While gazing on thy sweet repose.

Condemned to pangs like inward fire,

That thro' my injur'd bosom roll;

How would my heart in death desire,

Relief from fortune's hard controul:

Did not thy arms,

And infant charms,

To earth enchain my anxious soul!

Flow fast my tears, by you reliev'd,

I vent my anguish thus unknown,

But cease, 'ere you can be perceiv'd

By this dear child, to pity prone;

Whose tender heart

Would seize a part,

In grief that should be all my own.

Our cup of woe, which angels fill,

Perchance it is my lot to drain;

While that of joy, unmixt with ill,

May thus, my child, for thee remain:

If thou art free,

(So heaven decrees,)

I bless my doom of double pain!

"I won-

“I wonder,” said Mr. Nelson, when the song was ended, “you boys like so plaintive a ditty as that; I should have thought something merry would have suited you better.”—“Why, in general they are best,” answered one of them, “but Caroline sings that so well; though now, if she pleases, she may give us a more enlivening one, or a tune to dance to.”—“That is best,” said Mary, jumping up, “here are four of us, just enough for a reel.” Caroline began a country dance, and they continued dancing till bed-time, Charlotte sometimes taking her sisters place at the instrument, and though the supper was brought in, they all declared they could eat none.

CHAP. XIV.

“ Enough of suffering thou hast seen :

“ Poor heart ! I fear this world has been

“ A world of bitterness to thee.

THE time now drew near when they were again to lose their brothers:—this made the boys walk oftener than ride ; as when on horseback, they could not have the pleasure of their sister’s company.—It was in the middle of the summer, and the hay-makers were in almost every field.—Part of the paddock belonging to Mr. Nelson had been preserved for hay, and this was now the usual saunter of the young ladies:—there too Charles spent most of his time with John the servant, who felt his consequence increase, in being the head man, and the person appointed to distribute provisions

to the people employed in it. One afternoon the girls went to join their brothers, who were already there, and amusing themselves by heaping hay on Charles, who was equally pleased at being the object of their sport. After speaking to many of the people they knew, Charlotte asked the boys to accompany them in a walk.—“We have,” said she, “frequently mounted the hill since you have been with us—let us now go to the next village, walk through some fields, and return by the carriage road.”—“With all my heart,” said William, and readily followed his sisters;—they asked Charles to go with them, but he thought himself of too much use in the situation he was in to quit it, and therefore said, “John would miss him, when he came to give the men and women their supper.” They smiled at his consequence, and proceeded on their walk. When they were in the midst of the village, they were surprised to find
most

most of the houses empty:—only one old woman sat out at her door knitting, and they spoke to her, though they had never seen her before. “Are you at home alone?” said Charlotte—“Yes, miss,” answered she, “my children and grand-children are all in the hay-field, and I remember the time when I was glad to make one of them, and so I should now,” added she, encouraged by their condescension, “had I the use of my legs.” “Hay-making must be a very fatiguing employment,” said Charlotte—“It is rather warm to be sure, miss,” said the old woman—“but what of that!—in hot weather, one must expect to be hot—I know it is the pleasantest time of the year—how many happy days have I spent in the hay-fields—ah! that is over—now I can hardly move; but what of that!—I can knit—and as long as I have the use of my fingers, and my eye-sight, I shall earn something yet.” The boys were quite pleased with

with her conversation. "She seems so contented," said William—"and I have reason to be so," said she, overhearing what he said: "Ah, master, if you was to see what a good son I have got, and what fine grand-children, you would say I was happy; and such a good daughter-in-law too.—'Tis true, they works for their living—but what of that? —Thank God they have got work to do; while numbers of poor people cannot find employment—but that will never be the case in our village, while we have so many great squires, who comes to live in the neighbourhood—God bless them—'tis they who finds work for the poor.—You see all the people here be out at work—but what of that—I watches all their houses for them—so I be of some use still." The whole party were much pleased with their new acquaintance; and after giving her a little money, they promised to call again, and passed on. "That old woman," said Edward,

Edward, "puts me in mind of some verses I learnt at school by way of exercise, the week before I came home." Oh, do say them now," said Jane, "we are so fond of verses, you cannot think." On his sister's joining her request, he complied, and repeated the following lines.

TO PEACE.

COME, lovely gentle peace of mind,
With all thy smiling nymphs around,
Content and Innocence combin'd
With wreaths of sacred olive crown'd.

Come thou, that lov'st the walk at eve;
The banks of murm'ring streams along;
That lov'st the croud'd court to leave,
And hear the milk-maids' simple song.

That lov'st with Contemplation's eye
The headlong cataract to view,
That foams and thunders from on high,
While echoes oft the sound renew.

That lov'st the dark sequester'd wood,
Where silence spreads her brooding wings,
Nor less the lake's translucent flood,
The mossy grot, and bubbling springs.

With

With thee the lamp of Wisdom burns,
The guiding light to realms above;
With thee the raptur'd mortal learns
The wonders of celestial love.

With thee the poor have endless wealth,
And sacred Freedom glads the slave;
With thee the sick rejoice in health,
The weak are strong—the fearful brave.

O lovely gentle peace of mind!
Be thou on earth my constant guest;
With thee whate'er on earth I find,
The pledge of Heav'n shall make me blest.

This they all thought very pretty, and begged him to repeat it to their mother, when they returned home. They soon after reached the fields, and were astonished at the number of people employed in them. "What the old woman told us is true, I believe," said Charlotte. "The village must be empty, I think, when all its inhabitants are here.

"Ev'n stooping age is here, and infant hands
Trail the long rake, or with the fragrant load
O
"O'ercharg'd,

“ O'ercharg'd, amid the kind oppression roll.
“ Wide flies the tedded grain ; all in a row
“ Advancing broad, or wheeling round the field,
“ They spread the breathing harvest to the sun,
“ That throws refreshful round a rural smell ;
“ Or, as they rake the green-appearing ground,
“ And drive the dusky wave along the mead,
“ The russet haycock rises thick behind,
“ In order gay : while heard from dale to dale,
“ Waking the breeze, resounds the blended voice
“ Of happy labour, love, and social glee.”

“ That is from Thompson, is it not ?”
said William, “ you cannot think how fond
our master is of that poet. He makes almost all the boys learn by heart something out of the Seasons. “ They cannot learn any thing prettier,” said Caroline.—“ I think not,” said Edward ; “ but some people laughed at him, for letting us speak verses, and say he means to make us speak like players, but I cannot see that, for my part I like it better than Latin.” “ So do not I,” answered William—“ it is very well sometimes,

sometimes, but for a boy to be always mouthing out verses, is nonsense." "Well," said Edward, "you know we only have a piece once a week;"—"and often enough too," returned his brother: "but I do not like this subject:—it reminds us of what is soon to come.—How very short the time has appeared!—But we have had charming holidays—and more than a week to stay now." They were now in the turnpike road, and were conversing in this manner, when they were overtaken by a man in a sailor's habit, who advanced, and in a faltering accent asked charity of them:—they each felt in their pocket, but found no money, having just before given what they had to the old woman. "Indeed, ladies and gentlemen," said the man, "I never begged before, and I am very much distressed." "Are you not a sailor?" replied Edward, "they never want relief—if they are good—the king takes care of them."—

"You are right there, sir," answered the man—"his majesty's navy is very well provided for—blessings on his noble heart for it; but I belong to a merchant ship, and therefore can expect nothing from the king.—Indeed, indeed, young gentlemen," added he, "I am an honest man, and if you knew half my distress you would relieve me."—I have not now a farthing in my pocket, or I should scorn to ask for it, and I am going to Brighton to seek employment in some vessel there—I care not how mean it is, so I can but get something to do."—"Ah, that unlucky place!" said Charlotte—"if we had not spent all our money there, we might now have had something to give this poor sailor, who I believe wants it."—"Let us take him home," said Caroline, "perhaps papa will give him a little money, or at least he will have something to eat.—"We will do that," answered William.—"It was a lucky thought of yours, Caro-
line

line—I think father cannot be angry with us.”—He then turned to the man, who was walking pensively behind them; and told him to follow them. “It will not be much out of your way,” said he, “and though we have nothing to give you ourselves, I think we are going where you may meet with a little relief, however.” “God bless you, sir,” answered he—“I want no great deal, and if I had enough to pay for a little victuals, and a night’s lodging, where I am going I don’t fear of employment the next day, as neither hard work nor low wages will be an objection to me.” When they reached home, the girls flew to their father, who was in the garden, and told him what they had done. “You will not be angry, I am sure, papa,” said Mary, “when you see the man:”—he instantly went with them to the hall, where the boys still continued with the stranger, who made a low bow on Mr. Nelson’s entering,

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tering, and answered all the questions he was asked—such as, where he came from?—what ship he belonged to?—with great appearance of truth, and his countenance seemed to indicate honesty. Mr. Nelson soon began to be interested for him, and after ordering something for him to eat, expressed a wish to hear more of his history. “Alas! sir,” said the poor man, “it is but a melancholy one, particularly the last year.—Two years ago I was happy, and now I believe there is not a more miserable creature than myself—I have lost a wife and child, sir, without knowing what is become of either.” The whole family were in the room, listening to his story; and at this part of it, the eyes of all were fixed on their father, who, by an expressive look, shewed he understood their thoughts, though he forbade their speaking at present:—“let us hear more,” said he, again addressing himself to the man, “where have you been the last twelve months?”

months?—but first tell us your name.”

“George King is my name, sir,” answered he:—at this moment they all involuntarily cried out—“it must be him!”—while William and Edward slipped unperceived out of the room—their father again silenced them, and the man continued his tale. “I lost my father and mother about five years ago, after I had been in the service of a gentleman who traded to Turkey, above eight years; and if he had been alive now, I should not be in this state—but he is dead, and I am sure he is in heaven, for a better man there never was.—I got into another vessel, in the same trade, and at that time married a woman I loved very much:—we lived with her mother in this country for some time; and it was the happiest of my life. When I was called to join the ship, I left my wife near lying-in, and before my return, she was to remove to a situation nearer London, as that would be more convenient

venient for me.—My master, I soon found, was very different from the one I had served, and knew but little of trade; however I had no reason to complain:—we arrived at our destination in good time; and when there, I had a letter from my wife, saying she had got a fine boy, and was very well, and should soon remove to Paddington, where before my departure I had taken a house for her. My master, as I said before, knew little of trade—he made bad purchases—and as we had to wait for a convoy a great while, he determined to run the risk of coming home without one. This he told me, as he thought he should then stand a better chance of selling his cargo. I endeavoured to persuade him from it, as, though I wished to see my wife and child. I very well knew the danger we should be in—but he would not listen to what I or any one in the ship said—called us all cowards,

ards, and in an evil hour, I may say, ordered the vessel to sail.—We were not many days out of the harbour before we saw a French sail, which directly drove down upon us:—then I believe he repented of his rashness, and would gladly have returned from whence we came; but that was not possible. We felt ourselves unequal to the attack, and therefore tried to get away; they chased us very far out of our course, and we escaped them only by a worse calamity; though I know not if I should say that, for we English sailors think any thing better than falling into the hands of the enemy. We struck on a rock, and with great difficulty got the ship off again: then our master shewed his obstinacy once more; for though we urged him all we could to go into the first port which offered, he insisted on the vessel's not being in so bad a state, but that she could reach England as she was:—this was another proof of his ignorance; for
long

long before we got near home, the water came so fast into the ship, that nearly half the men were employed every day at the pump, to keep her tolerably clear. At last our master was convinced we were in danger:—but not to tire you, ladies and gentlemen, with too long a story, I will only add, that we staid by the ship while there was any hope of saving her, and then taking to the boats, we committed ourselves to the mercy of the waves, leaving every thing belonging to us in the vessel, which sunk before we were out of sight; and with her perished the hopes of the owner, for I then discovered that he had nothing but what he expected to make from her cargo—his spirits were gone; and I believe he made no effort to preserve his life. After this loss, we were tossed about on the ocean for two or three days, when we were taken up by a vessel bound to Lisbon, and before we reached that port, my master died.

died.—We were treated with great humanity by the people there, and as we had no money to pay our passage home, I and many more of the crew were obliged to work it; that is, do what we could in any vessel that would take us; and though I was impatient to reach England, we were compelled to stay two months before the ship sailed, in which we were offered our passage; at last we arrived in the river Thames, after I had been absent nearly a year and a half; and on our landing, I made the best of my way to Paddington, expecting to find my wife comfortably settled there—then it was, my heart began to fail me, when on enquiring for her, I found no one that knew her, or had even heard of her name.—I had a little money, which had been given me while in the ship, and with that I came into this county:—when I had reached the village in which I left my wife with her mother, I walked with eagerness to the
door

door of the cottage they had inhabited—but what was my disappointment, on seeing the door opened by a stranger:—of her I enquired for its former owners; and without thinking or asking who I was, she informed me they were dead. At this information, so abruptly given, I almost lost my senses, and when I recovered, I found myself in the house, surrounded by many of my former neighbours.—They told me, in answer to my repeated enquiries for my wife, that when she was about to remove, after my departure, her mother was taken ill, and she could not then leave her, but sent to give up the house at Paddington, and staid to nurse her mother, which she did, with great attention, through a lingering illness, and spent all her money in procuring her comforts:—after her death, which was not more than five months ago, she left the village with her child, leaving the goods in the house to pay the rent of it; and they

thought she went to Paddington, as that was the place she expressed a wish to be settled in, before my return, which she then daily expected:—they added, that they thought her very unfit for the journey, as her health was much injured by her close attendance on her mother, and as she went on foot, they feared her circumstances were not very good — think then, sir, what must have been my distress?—I returned to London, enquiring at every public house, I thought it likely she would stop at, if they could give me any intelligence of her—some recollected a woman very ill, who passed that way, with a child, about the time I mentioned—but no one could tell me more than that she was going to London: I traced her there—but in so large a place, found it impossible to hear any thing farther of her. After lamenting her loss, I thought of coming to Brighton for employment in some

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of

of the packets there.—I wished not to be out of England so long again, as I still flattered myself with the hope of hearing of my wife and child, though I could think of no way likely to gain the information I so much wished for.—I was on my road thither, when I had the good fortune to meet your family, sir.” — “Good fortune I hope you will find it,” interrupted Mr. Nelson, “for I think I can tell you of your child.” — “Indeed, sir!” said the man, starting up—“and not of my wife?” Mr. Nelson shook his head.—“Ah then, she is dead!” he exclaimed, and the tears rolled down his cheeks in large drops. “Will you fetch those things you have of the poor woman’s?” said Mr. Nelson to his wife.—“They are already here,” answered she:—“I thought by the poor man’s story they would now find an owner.” She then produced the small box, which the man no sooner saw, than he exclaimed—“that is the
very

very box I gave her at parting, with what money I could spare, in it—it is marked with my own name.—Oh tell me, sir, how you came by it.” Mr. Nelson then told him the circumstance of her death, as related in a former part of this work; and at that moment the two boys entered, leading in little George between them. “Is that my child?” said the unfortunate man, and catching him in his arms, turned his face from all in the room to conceal his tears, which now flowed more plenteously than before—the girls and their mother wept also, at so affecting a scene, and the boys could not help joining them, though they wished to hide what did them honour; as the proof of a feeling heart can be no disgrace to any one. The man after some moments returned the child to the ground, who appeared frightened at what had passed, yet did not cry, and as soon as he found himself at liberty, ran to Charlotte

and Caroline, who willingly received him. His father then with great energy, thanked Mr. and Mrs. Nelson for their kindness to it and its mother.—“May God Almighty reward you for it,” added he—“we are sufficiently recompenced,” answered Mrs. Nelson, “in finding we have done good to a worthy man, for such I believe you to be—let us not talk longer on this melancholy subject—make yourself happy in your child, and believe me, if on farther acquaintance you prove yourselves worthy of it, you shall neither of you want my assistance.” The man’s heart was too full to allow him to express his gratitude, and he followed the servant, who was ordered to shew him the kitchen, in silence. Little George was given to Anne, and the rest of the family retired to the parlour to tea, and to consult what farther could be done for the relief of the poor sailor.

CHAP.

CH A P. XV.

“ O let me own the heart that pants to bless,
“ That nobly scorns to hide the useless store ;
“ But looks around for objects of distress,
“ And triumphs in a sorrow for the poor.”

WALCOT.

THE next morning, Mr. Nelson sent for the man into the parlour, and after giving him money to procure a change of clothes, asked him what he intended to do ? The man answered—“ That he wished to get employed, and meant to accept whatever offered, though it might not be what he should exactly chose.”—“ Remember,” said Mr. Nelson, “ I have no other’s word for your good character except your own ; and though I do not disbelieve you, I should not be acting right, did I not make farther enquiries.”—“ I would wish you to do it, sir,” replied the man, “ but I know now,

no one who could give you a character of me, as both my masters are dead; but the owners of the ship I came home in, I do not doubt they will attest the truth of what I have said, and I hope will also speak of my conduct while with them, in a way that will do me credit." He then, by Mr. Nelson's desire, wrote a direction to the gentleman he returned with to England; and after repeating his thanks for all the kindness shewn him, he was ordered to go to Brighton, procure what was necessary, and make enquiries for a situation, likely to suit him; and when he thought an answer could be received to the letter Mr. Nelson intended to write, to return to Eason House. When he left the room, he asked one of the servants, who were now all acquainted with his story, and much interested for him, to shew him the road he was to take, and first go with him to the cottage where his child was, that he might see him once more. John immediately

diately offered to accompany him—"but as for seeing the boy once more," added he, "why d'ye say that? you will see him many times yet, I'll warrant ye—'evil to day, good to-morrow;' that's an old saying, but 'tis a true one, and therefore don't let your spirits sink; your misfortunes are pretty near at an end now, I'll venture to say, for when you are got into the hands of my master, you need not fear, you will be taken care of." In this way honest John tried to comfort the poor man, till they arrived at the cottage, where Mrs. Carey expected them, as she had been told the circumstance of George's having found his father, by Anne, when she carried him home the evening before; she had therefore dressed her little charge in clean clothes, and when they entered he was running about the room, at play with the old doll the young ladies had given to the girls. "Here Mrs. Carey," said John, "I have brought you a visitor; come
George,

George, go to your father," added he, as he led the child towards his companion, who stretched out his arms to receive him, and George not very unwillingly suffered the stranger to kiss him: the whole party soon got acquainted, and Mrs. Carey offered the man whatever her house afforded; but when the poor man had persuaded his little boy to sit on his knee, he wanted nothing else; and while John and the good woman were chatting very earnestly, he was sufficiently engaged in observing the likeness of his child to its mother, which, though it recalled to his memory her loss, filled his eyes with tears of pleasure, which he found a difficulty in suppressing. At last, John reminded him it was time to depart, as he might be wanted at home, and after kissing it affectionately, he put the boy into Mrs. Carey's arms, thanking her at the same time for the care she had taken of it. They then proceeded to the Brighton road, when John left him, with many good wishes for his success.

In

In the afternoon, the children proposed going on the side of the Downs to look for wild strawberries, as the little Carey's, and other children of the village, had offered them to sell for many days. This Mrs. Nelson permitted, on condition they would not wish to bring any home—"For we can afford to buy them," said she, "and it is in a manner robbing the poor, of what, perhaps, they have great dependance on." This they had not thought of, and readily gave up the idea of bringing home their supper, which they had pleased themselves with the thought of doing. Their mother and elder sisters, with the boys, accompanied them, and they all enjoyed their walk very much, and met with many poor children employed in picking them. "What ragged shoes you have on," said Charlotte to one of them: "Yes," answered the child, "I know's it, but mammy says, when I have gathered enough strawberries, I shall have a new pair."—"You see now," said Mrs.

Mrs. Nelson, "what I told you is true; if you were to carry home any of these strawberries, perhaps this poor child might not have her shoes so soon."—"She shall though," said Charles, "for I will gather some, and put into her basket," which he did with great pleasure, and felt himself happy when called a good boy for doing it. Mrs. Nelson, after enquiring where the little girl lived, promised to call and give her mother something: this she did not forget to do in a day or two, and left money enough, not only to supply her, but all her brothers and sisters with a new pair of shoes each. As they were returning home, she recollected Mrs. Smith's beautiful sonnet to the South Downs, and repeated it to her children.

To the SOUTH DOWNS.

AH, hills below'd! where once a happy child,
Your beechen shades, your turf, your flowers
among,
I wove your blue-bells into garlands wild,
And waked your echos with my artless song.

Ah,

Ah, hills below'd! your turf, your flowers remain,
But can they peace to this sad breast restore?
For one poor moment sooth the sense of pain,
And teach a breaking heart to throb no more?
And you, Aruna, in the vale below:
As to the sea, your limpid waves you bear,
Can you one kind Lethean cup bestow,
To drink a long oblivion to my care?
Ah, no! when all, e'en hopes last ray is gone,
There's no oblivion but in death alone!

"That is very pretty," said William,
"cannot you think of another sonnet,
mama?" His sisters and Edward were wish-
ing to ask the same thing, and Mrs. Nelson,
after some recollection, complied in the
following manner:

TO SPRING.

AGAIN the wood and long withdrawing vale
In many a tint of tender green are drest;
Where the young leaves unfolding quite conceal,
Beneath their early shade, the half-form'd nest
Of finch or wood-lark; and the primrose pale,
And lavish cowslip, wildly scatter'd round,
Give their sweet spirits to the sighing gale.

Ah,

Ah, season of delight! could ought be found
To sooth awhile the tortur'd bosom's pain,
Of sorrows rankling shaft to cure the wound,
And bring life's first delusions once again,
'Twere surely met in thee,—thy prospects fair,
Thy sounds of harmony, thy balmy air,
Have power to cure all sadness but despair!

The next day the boys took a ride with their father, and in their way stopped at Mr. Hunt's door, to beg the favor of their company to dinner the next day. The invitation was accepted, and at the appointed time Mr. Nelson sent his carriage for them: the two eldest children came with their father and mother, and Jane, of whose age they were nearest, was quite pleased with finding some young companions, and she did all she could to amuse them. After the ladies left the dining room, Mrs. Hunt expressed a wish for a little music, and Charlotte and Caroline instantly complied: after playing two or three things, they asked her if she would set down to the instrument, which she did, and they were surprised

prised to find her a perfect mistress of it. Afterwards, when conversing on the pleasure of music, she said — “ Though she could not devote to it so much time as it required, she generally practised a little every day in teaching her children, as Mr. Hunt was so very fond of it, that he wished all his family to play. When the gentlemen joined them, the girls were desired to play again, and Mr. Hunt accompanied them with his voice : this made the evening appear short, and when the time came for their visitors to leave them, Mrs. Nelson could not suppose it was so late ; but on Mrs. Hunt’s saying she thought it too late for her children to stay longer, the carriage was again ordered, and they departed equally pleased with each other ; the little Hunts being as much flattered by the attention of Miss Mary and Miss Jane to them, as their father and mother were by that of Mr. and Mrs. Nelson.

CHAP. XVI.

“ Ah! then what honest triumph flushed my breast,
“ This truth once known, to bless is to be blest.”

AFTER two or three days, Mr. Nelson received a very satisfactory answer to his letter respecting the poor sailor, who the same morning came back dressed so clean, and with all his new clothes on, that he was hardly known. Mr. Nelson told him he was very well satisfied with what he had heard respecting him, and when he remarked the change in his appearance, the man said—“It is all from your bounty, sir; I found the money you gave me sufficient to buy me these clothes, and I have still a little left.”—“You must be an excellent manager then,” replied Mr. Nelson, “for it was not much I gave you, but I am glad to see you have made so good an use of it; I have

have so succeeded as well on the other business you went on? are you likely to be employed?"—"I am afraid not, sir," replied the man, "I spoke to several people, owners of vessels, and they wanted no new hand; they said, they had plenty now unemployed: one person I went to had just taken possession of one of the packets, and with him I had some hopes of getting work, but he told me the vessel was full; however, some people I met with, and who heard me apply to him, told me I might not wait long for employment with him, as he was always changing his people, but I do not mean to stay for that, sir," added he, "I will go to another port, rather than live the idle life I do at present."—"I should think," said Mr. Nelson, "if you were to enter into his Majesty's service, it would be better for you than trusting to these precarious employments; you would there be sure of your pay also, which, in these little vessels, you can-

not always receive at the time you wish."—
"I would do that directly, sir," answered
he, "if it was not for my child; but, per-
haps, the ship I may be in may be sent on a
long voyage, and then what is to become
of it?"—"Is it not under my care?" said
Mr. Nelson—"Yes, sir, thanks to you,
it is, yet—don't be angry with me, sir, for
speaking so freely; but when it has found
its father, would it not be encroaching on
your goodness for him to go away, perhaps
for many years, and leave it so."—"You
are an honest fellow," returned Mr. Nel-
son, "but if you are not in a situation to
support your child, others will till you are:
tell us now what was your scheme?"—"I
meant, sir," answered the man, "to save a
little money from what I could earn by be-
ing employed in some of the vessels here-
abouts, for a year or so, and to leave that
with the good woman who has now the
care of my boy, and afterwards to enter on
board

board a man of war, that I might at my return have enough to pay for his board, hoping she would still continue to keep it, and that your family, sir, would have the goodness now and then to take notice of it."—"I like your plan very well," said Mr. Nelson; "it implies a good heart, but yet I think mine the best; let me advise you to enter directly; you will have better wages, as I said before, and therefore more likely to have it in your power to pay Mrs. Carey sooner, if that is your wish, and you need not fear she will forget your child, or that my family will forget it." The man again expressed his thanks, and readily agreed to the plan Mr. Nelson proposed: when he had left the room, the boys, who were willing to imitate their father in all things, begged leave to propose a scheme they had thought of, and on his desiring them to mention it, William said—"You know, sir, when we go to school,

you generally give us some money, and we would be very glad of only half of it, and the other, if you please, to be reserved for this poor man, by way of helping a little towards fitting him out for sea."—"I am much pleased with your intention, boys," said their father, "and if you really wish it, I will not refuse you the pleasure of assisting an honest man." Charlotte then made the same request in the name of her sisters and herself, that part of their quarterly allowance might be kept back for the same purpose, and Jane and Charles desired some money might be taken out of their boxes to help the poor sailor: such early instances of benevolence in their children, made Mr. and Mrs. Nelson quite happy, and in a few days, with the assistance of the whole family, the man left the house with many prayers for the happiness of its inhabitants, and taking a fond leave of his child, went to Portsmouth, and entered on board

board a ship, the captain of which Mr. Nelson knew, and to whom he had given him a recommendation. After dinner, Jane was made very happy, by the servant's bringing into the room a pretty squirrel in a neat cage, with Thomas Carey's duty to Miss Jane, and hoped she would accept of it."—"May I, mama?" asked the little girl, with a look that expressed a fear of a denial. "Why, you know my dear," said Mrs. Nelson, "I do not approve of any thing's being kept in cages, but ask how long it has been caught, John:" he soon returned, and said—"It was taken from the nest, and that the boy had only kept it till he had taught it to eat out of any one's hand, and had made it a little tame."—"Oh then, mama," said Jane, "I may have it; you know it would not be able to feed itself, was I to let it loose." Mr. Nelson sent the boy a shilling, and Jane ran up stairs to shew her squirrel to Charles, and

and get Anne to hang it up in some place where she might see it very often. They soon after went for a walk, and in the evening, Caroline repeated a beautiful fable of Dr. Langhorne's, called

The EVENING PRIMROSE.

THERE are, who love the shades of life,
And shun the splendid walks of fame;
There are, who hold it rueful strife,
To risk ambition's losing game,

That far from Envy's lurid eye,
The fairest fruits of genius rear,
Content to see them bloom and die,
In friendship's small, but genial sphere,

Than vainer flowers, tho' sweeter far,
The evening primrose shuns the day;
Blooms only to the western star,
And loves its solitary ray.

In Enon's vale, an aged hind,
At the dim twilight's closing hour,
On his time-smooth'd staff reclin'd,
With wonder view'd the opening flower.

" Ill fated flower, at eve to blow,"
 (In pity's simple thought he cries,)
" Thy bosom must not feel the glow
 " Of summer suns, or smiling skies.
" Nor thee, the vagrant of the field,
 " The hamlet's little train behold;
" Their eyes to sweet oppression yield,
 " When thine to shades of night unfold.
" Nor thee the hasty shepherd heeds,
 " When love has filled his breast with cares;
" For flowers he rifles all the meads,
 " For waking flowers—but thine forbears.
" Ah! waste no more that beauteous bloom
 " On night's dull eye, that fragrant breath;
" Let splendid suns those gems illumine,
 " Fair flower, to live unseen is death!"

Deep in her unfrequented bower,
 Sweet Philomela pour'd her strain:
The bird of eve approv'd her flower,
 And answer'd thus the anxious swain.

 " Live unseen

" Lovely flower, we'll live unseen
" By moonlight shades, in vallies green.
" Lovely flower, we'll live unseen;
" Of our pleasures deem not lightly,
" Laughing day may look more sprightly,

 " But

“ But I love the modest mien,
“ (Still I love the modest mien,)
“ Of dewy evening fair, and her star-train’d queen.
“ Did’st thou, shepherd never find
“ Pleasure is of pensive kind?
“ Has thy cottage never known
“ That she loves to live alone?
“ Dost thou not, at ev’ning hour
“ Feel some soft and secret power,
“ Stealing o’er thy willing mind,
“ Leave sweet serenity behind?
“ Whilst all dispers’d, the cares of day,
“ Glide thro’ the falling gloom away;
“ Joy to think thy lot was laid
“ In this undistinguish’d shade,
“ Far from the world’s infectious view,
“ Thy little virtues safely blew.
“ Go, and in day’s more dang’rous hour
“ Guard thy emblematic flower.”

Before they went to bed, Mr. Nelson asked the boys, when they thought of going to school? “Do not ask us, father,” said Edward, “we do not like to think about it.” — “I received a letter some time ago,” answered he, “to say the school opened on
Monday

Monday next."—"So soon as that!" exclaimed the girls, "sure papa, you are mistaken!"—"No, he is not," said William, "I thought it must be near the time; but when are we to go?" added he sorrowfully. "Remember you came home a fortnight before the holidays began," replied Mr. Nelson, "therefore must not stay long after them; perhaps Wednesday John will attend you."—"And this," said William, "is Friday, so that we have not a week longer to stay; but we do not complain, father, you are very good to us, and though we must certainly wish to stay longer, we will not ask, or even hope for it."—"We shall not be here long after you," said Mr. Nelson, "for though the country would be pleasant yet for many months, your father's business will call him to town very soon, and as he will not be able to return to us for a great while, I believe we shall accompany him."

CHAP.

CH A P. XVII.

“Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind.”

GRAY.

THE few days longer which the boys had to stay were devoted entirely to their amusement, and when Wednesday came, they took leave of their father and mother, and bidding an affectionate farewell to their sisters, they left the house—not without regret; but John endeavoured to reconcile them to the change, by reminding them “it would not be six months before they returned for the next holidays; then you know you will see all your friends again,” added he—“Yes,” said William, “but it will be in London—there we shall not have half the pleasure we have had the last six weeks.” “You don’t know that,” continued John—“the country is not very pleasant

pleasant in the winter—I know I shall not be sorry to be out of it at Christmas.” The girls felt their time quite heavily, when they had lost their brothers, and did not enjoy their walk near so much as when they accompanied them.—In one of their rambles, they recollected the old woman, they once visited, when the boys were with them, and determined to see her again.—“ Perhaps,” said Charlotte, “ we shall not find her so happy now :”—but she was pleased to find herself mistaken: they found her as chearful and contented as ever. When Caroline asked her, “ how much knitting she had done, since they last met ? ” She answered, “ two or three pair of stockings, miss, and I have sold them too—the time is now coming, when I shall have nothing else to do—harvest is coming on—and then, ladies, if you walk this way, you’ll find me all alone again.” She then called some of her grandchildren, and presented them to
R her

her visitors, saying, "a'n't they fine children now, miss? I can't say but what I be a little proud of them, and then they are so good, too." Charlotte and Caroline divided what halfpence they had between them; and leaving a few shillings with the old woman, continued their walk, not forgetting to call on little George as they returned home, particularly as their mother had given them leave to have him to spend the next day with them. In a few weeks the harvest began, and then it was they wished for their brothers more than before,—the fields were again full of work-people—and they were seldom in the house, except at the time their masters were with them. Before the reapers had left the fields, the gleaners entered, and Mr. and Mrs. Nelson walked with their children among them—the former too well recollected his favourite Thomson, to suffer the men he employed to be too strict in clearing his fields.

“ Be

“ Be not too narrow, husbandman, but fling
“ From the full sheaf, with charitable stealth,
“ The liberal handful. Think ! Oh, grateful, think
“ How good the God of Harvest is to you ;
“ While these unhappy partners of your kind
“ Wide hover round you, like the fowls of Heav’n,
“ And ask their humble dole.”

He repeated these lines to his children, while they took from the last waggon-load large heaps of grain, and scattered them among the people, who thankfully received it. As they returned home, Mary, by her father’s desire, repeated the story of Palemon and Lavinia, from the same author. The leaves soon began to fall from the trees, and ripe nuts, which they had searched for in vain in the summer, might now be found in plenty. — “ How foolish we were,” said Charlotte to her sister, “ to think of finding them then—the country people would have laughed at us finely, had they known our ignorance.” “ I am sorry to see the leaves fall so fast,” said Caroline, “ it reminds us

of the approach of winter," "and of our removal likewise, I am afraid," continued her sister; "but we must consider we shall have the pleasure of seeing the Miss Rivers's, by going to town, and likewise the agreeable expectation of visiting this charming place again next summer." They returned home to tea, and already found the evenings so shortened, that they had not time to walk afterwards; and before the little ones retired to bed, Jane repeated the following lines, written at the close of autumn.

THE ROBIN,

AN ELEGY.

O COME, thou melancholy muse,
With solemn dirge assist my strain,
While shades descend, and weeping dews
In sorrows wrap the rural plain.

Her mantle grave cool ev'ning spreads;
The sun cuts short his joyful rage;
The jocund hills, the laughing meads,
Put on a sick'ning, dying face.

Stern

Stern winter brings his gloomy train;
Each pleasing landscape fades from view;
In solemn state he shuts the scene;
To flow'ry fields we bid adieu.

Quite stripp'd of ev'ry beauty, see
How soon fair Nature's honours fade!
The flow'rs are fled—each spreading tree
No more affords a grateful shade.

Their naked branches now behold,
Bleak winds pierce thro' with murmur'ing sound;
Chill'd by the northern breezes cold,
Their leafy honours strew the ground.

So man, who treads life's active stage,
Like leaf or blossom fades away,
In tender youth or riper age,
Drops thus into his native clay.

Alas! and can we chuse but moan,
To see all Nature's charms expire:
Fair blooming spring, gay summer gone,
And autumn hastening to retire.

But see the tender red-breast comes,
Forlaking now the leafless grove,
Hops o'er my threshold, picks my crumbs,
And courts my hospitable love.

Then, sooths me with his plaintive tale,
As Sol withdraws his ev'ning ray,
Chearing, as evening shades prevail,
The soft remains of closing day.

O welcome to my homely board !
There unmolested shalt thou stand ;
Were it with choicest dainties stored,
For thee I'd ope a liberal hand.

Since thou, of all the warbling throng,
Who now in silence far retire,
Remain'st to soothe me with a song,
And many a pleasing thought inspire.

After they had left the room, their father said, " he must go to town the next week ; but I do not wish to take you away," added he, " if you feel inclined to stay longer." — " If you are likely to return to us," answered Mrs. Nelson, " we should like to continue here." " That," said he, " is impossible — I can visit the country no more till next summer, and think myself very fortunate in having had such a long respite from business as this has been." — " It will be very uncomfortable

uncomfortable for my father," said Charlotte, "to be in town for any time by himself; let us return with him, mama." "You are very good, my dear girl, to propose it," replied Mr. Nelson; "it shews me I have not bestowed the pains I have taken to make my children happy in vain." "We ought to be disinterested in this instance," observed Caroline, "and endeavour all in our power to contribute to your pleasure, my dear father, when you have increased ours so greatly; I shall be quite sorry if we do not accompany you, for I shall think we are not acting right if we stay behind." "Then," said Mrs. Nelson, "it is easily settled—we will go with your father, and believe me, we shall return to this place with more pleasure the next summer, for having quitted it when he ought." The girls soon after went to bed, and the next morning told Anne to prepare for their removal, as they were all going to leave the country

country the next week: "and shall not you be very sorry, ma'am?" asked Anne: "not very," said Charlotte, "for it is to give my father pleasure; and we ought, I am sure, to do all in our power to oblige him." Charles was soon reconciled to going away, when he heard his papa could not come there any more for a long time.—"I am sure," said he, "I don't want to stay, if papa is not here; for I had rather be where he is a great deal." Mary and Jane tried to imitate their sisters, in the readiness with which they gave up their wish of continuing longer, and only desired they might have little George once more, before they left him for so many months:—this was readily complied with, and when Mrs. Carey came to fetch him home, she promised they should find him much improved at their return. Mrs. Nelson and her daughters called to take leave of Mrs. Hunt;—but as they had seen or heard nothing of the

Mortonson family, they did not think it necessary to pay them a farewell visit, but concluded their dislike to each other was mutual, and therefore neither would wish for any further acquaintance. The day soon arrived in which they were to bid adieu to the country, and after running round the garden, to give a farewell look to all which had afforded them so much pleasure, they ascended the carriages without expressing any sorrow that the time was come when they were to leave it.—Charlotte had the night before cautioned her sisters against discovering any regret—"let us not go unwillingly," said she, "or suffer papa to think we feel no pleasure in promoting his convenience." They remembered her advice, and talked only of the friends they should meet in London. At the last view they had of the house, their father thanked them all for their ready compliance with his wishes, and promised very early
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in the next summer to gratify their's, by returning. Nothing material occurred in the journey ; and they arrived in good time at their house in London, where Mrs. Rivers, who had been apprised of their returning, by a letter from Mrs. Nelson, was waiting with her daughters to receive them. the meeting was a very happy one, and when chatting with their friends, the girls acknowledged to each other, they did not regret leaving Eason House.

FINIS.

